IRIS MURDOCH: METAPHORS OF VISION

METAPHORS OF VISION: A FELLOWSHIP OF THE ARTS IN THE NOVELS OF IRIS MURDOCH

By

KARIN G. STEINER, B. A.

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts

McMaster University

November, 1984

MASTER OF ARTS (1984)
(English)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Metaphors of Vision: A Fellowship of the Arts in the Novels of Iris Murdoch

AUTHOR: Karin G. Steiner, B. A. (University of Toronto)

SUPERVISOR: Professor James King

NUMBER OF PAGES: xi, 111

ABSTRACT

With a particular focus on painting, this study examines the major allusions to the visual arts in the novels of Iris Murdoch. Although some critics have recognized the important role the arts have to play in these novels, their discussions tend to be too general. This thesis attempts a more detailed look at the most significant grouping of the arts in the Murdoch canon, for as Murdoch herself believes, visual structures are fundamental to explanation in any field. The works of art treated here are considered as metaphors of vision, and these are set against the other major metaphors of vision in the novels, those relating to water imagery, for the emphasis on art in the early and middle stages of Murdoch's career shifts to one on nature in the later novels.

But the arts form not a pyramid
but a circle. They are the defensive
outer barriers of all simpler modes
of communication. Without these
defences men sink to beasts.

The Black Prince

Preface

Allusions to works of art in the novels of Iris Murdoch are metaphors of vision that inform the texts. I intend both the literal and psychological implications of the word "vision" as it relates to reality, that is, a combination of enargeia and energeia, to borrow from the terminology of the sister arts tradition. Of the two, however, Aristotle's energeia is perhaps more important, for as Helen Steiner has stated: " . . . the moderns exchanged the notion of enargeia for energeia in determining how art could be like reality."[1] If my focus on painting, above other arts, seems to detract from the portion of the title that reads "A Fellowship of the Arts," my only reply can be: as in Murdoch's philosophy of art, so in her novels. She often singles out painting as a metaphor for all the arts; thus by extension, I am suggesting that one may evaluate the allusions to, say music, by the same methods one would the allusions to painting.

I am not, for the purposes of this thesis, entering into the sometimes confusing, but always interesting, theoretical debates concerning approaches to the comparative arts, for surely one's method must be adapted to the material at hand. The approach one takes with one artist is not necessarily the approach one ought to take with another. I am more concerned here with specific ways in which the arts

function in the works of Iris Murdoch than with generalized theories of how, for instance, painting compares with the art of novel-writing. On the other hand, I do hope, in a small way, to advance the cause of comparative arts studies by focusing less on abstract theories of inter-relatedness, and more on actual analysis of how the arts interact. In this respect, my study has benefitted from the concise and elegant history of the "ut pictura poesis" tradition in Jean Hagstrum's The Sister Arts. I have tried, for the most part, to rely on Iris Murdoch's own philosophy of art as a guide to my interpretations, but in some cases, namely in chapters two and three, I have used some of Ulrich Weisstein's delineations of areas that require study in the comparative arts.[2]

This thesis is part of a new trend in Murdoch criticism, one long overdue, which shifts its focus away from the philosophical implications of the novels to the artistic implications. Richard Todd has considered the "Shakespearean Interest", and Elizabeth Dipple, in Iris Murdoch: Work for the Spirit (1982), has provided a reading of the novels that relegates philosophy to a secondary role below that of religion and morality. Both critics deal with artistic shortcomings in Murdoch's novels, but my paper, for want of space (which is not to imply that there are too many limitations to document), has the less ambitious end of identifying and analysing allusions to the visual arts in the fiction. If in doing so I am showing that Murdoch's novels are "dry" as op-

posed to medium dry (?), a middle ground between crystalline and naturalistic (Murdoch's terminology), then so be it. I think it will become clear, however, that in some instances the dreaded effect of patterning resulting from allusion to painting that works symmetrically in the novel is balanced by the more sharply defined characters who emerge as a result of coming into contact with art.

This paper follows the example of some of the more contemporary critics who do not shy away from commenting upon the most recent fiction by Murdoch. Analyses of the early works at the expense of the later ones, though, are still being conducted. Even a recent dissertation by Michael Birdsall, entitled "Art, Beauty and Morality in the Novels of Iris Murdoch" (1980), does not reach far beyond the early novels, despite its more contemporary focus on art. The novels chosen for examination in this paper are representative of the three stages I feel constitute Murdoch's career as a novelist. The Flight from the Enchanter (1955) was selected to account for the first stage, which I perceive as ending with The Time of the Angels (1966). A.S. Byatt herself would no doubt have added this book to her study of the early works, for it has been grouped with The Unicorn in its "gloominess". The title of Byatt's book, Degrees of Freedom (1965), indicates the main philosophical interest in the early years, but in terms of allusions to art, The Flight is representative of a general emphasis in the early period

on judging "the characters by their reactions to a work of art."[3]

The next two stages are more difficult to distinguish, Most critics, however, agree that The Nice and the Good (1968) marks the turning point from the early to the middle period. Frank Baldanza has noted the shift in philosophical interest from freedom to love in this novel, which he feels persists in the subsequent ones. Richard Todd has noted the new emphasis on dealing with death from Bruno's Dream (1969) on. He defines the middle period in The Shakespearean Interest (1979) as the novels from The Nice and the Good to The Black Prince (1973). I would add The Sacred and Profane Love Machine (1974) as it complements its predecessor, for it is based on a work of art that rules its title and its story. The special focus on this middle period in my paper stems from the variety of allusions to the arts found here. Love Machine is both similar and dissimilar to the works of the early and middle periods, and thus merits a separate discussion.

The late period is then rather arbitrarily composed of the rest of the novels to date. Although Henry and Cato (1976) is a definite exception (indeed, it will enter the discussion of the middle period), Murdoch's latest novel, The Philosopher's Pupil (1983), suggests a shift in vision from the world of art to the world of nature. The Sea, the Sea (1978) is perhaps the earliest example of this change in perspective. Even the art itself in these novels seems to reflect the force of nature. Perhaps Charles Arrowby's

retirement by the sea is an expression of Murdoch's own desire , as a novelist, to turn increasingly to nature in her art.

The methodology employed in each of the subsequent chapters involves an analysis of one major text to which is added comparisons from other related texts.

I would like to extend special thanks to Dr. James King for his enthusiastic and encouraging supervision. I would also like to thank Dr. D. Goellnicht and Dr. Linda Hutcheon for agreeing to read the paper at a particularly busy time.

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

INTRODUCTION

In a talk given at a seminar in her honour in 1978 at the university of Caen, France, Iris Murdoch offered a synopsis, intentional or otherwise, of much of the theory of art that she has expressed in articles and lectures throughout her career. The talk, entitled "L'art est l'imitation de la nature," is a natural extension of her book The Fire and the Sun:Why Plato Banished the Artists (1977), which explores, as its subtitle indicates, Plato's hostility to art. Having defined what Plato disliked and mistrusted in art (imitation itself, which he saw as mere duplication, usually of the baser side of human behaviour; the artifice or magic of art; the sense that art does not educate, for only nature can; the power of art to blur the distinctions between the presence and absence of reality), it is logical that Murdoch would wish to define her position with respect to Plato's.Certainly,her views periodically creep into The Fire and the Sun in such remarks as, "surely art transforms, is creation rather than imitation, as Plato's own praise of the divine frenzy must imply,"[1] but these are developed more fully in the address to the students of the university of Caen.

What becomes abundantly clear in "L'art est l'imitation de la nature" is the novelist's interest in the visual

world, for Murdoch uses the art of painting as a paradigm for the other arts. This is something that she has done before in The Fire and the Sun, in response to questions posed by interviewers, as well as in early philosophical writings, but it is a technique that is, above all, a feature of her novels. Indeed, the very act of writing a novel for Iris Murdoch involves rendering a picture into words. She has described this method to one interviewer by using The Bell as an example. The scene in which Michael's headlights beam into the night while Toby walks towards them to see if his eyes will shine like those of a cat apparently inspired that novel. She stored the image of the beam of light in her mind and The Bell evolved around this picture, which she held back until it was ready to be set down, or, one is tempted to say, until it was ready to be framed by the rest of the narrative.

Since a visual experience inspires Iris Murdoch to write, it is only fitting that she call other visual experiences into the novels. Like Henry James, who has influenced her, Murdoch alludes to the fine arts and the decorative arts, to paintings and objects that her readers recognize, to works of art that therefore help to define and shade her work. She uses the art of painting, however, most often, either on its own or in combination with other arts, to heighten or to enrich the visual dimension of the novels. This suggests that she ascribes to the positive

outlook on the sister arts presented in The Art of Fiction:

> . . . the analogy between the art of the painter and the art of the novelist is, so far as I am able to see, complete. Their inspiration is the same, their process (allowing for the different quality of the vehicle) is the same, their success is the same. They may learn from each other, they may explain and sustain each other. Their cause is the same, and the honour of one is the honour of another.[2]

There is no need to summarize the tradition of "ut pictura poesis", for Jean Hagstrum's excellent book, The Sister Arts, has already done so. What needs to be defined, however, is Murdoch's position within the tradition. The quotation from The Art of Fiction suggests a return to the Renaissance tradition of "ut pictura poesis" without the rivalry -- the paragone -- that existed between poetry and painting, art and nature.[3] The Renaissance was also a time when painters were often poets as well. It seems fitting to place Iris Murdoch in this particular tradition, then, for her own comments suggest the affinity: "I'm not sure it's not happier to be a painter, but I think to be a poet or a painter must be the nicest thing of all. Novelist comes third."[4]

"L'art est l'imitation de la nature" confirms the interest in painting, but it also provides a concise philosophical context for Murdoch's use of all the arts in her novels. She begins the address by stating that she agrees with the dictum,"art imitates nature." She defends this position by discussing the imitative act, the nature of art itself, and the process involved in creating and interpreting

a work of art. The discussion acquires, typically, a moral complexion, and includes the contention that the puritanical Platonic mistrust of art has recurred in our critical heritage down through Tolstoy, Freud, and the Structuralists of today. This digression represents an extension of The Fire and the Sun, in which Platonic puritanism is traced in Tolstoy and Kant. The argument fosters an inclination to turn to Murdoch's own novels to test her theories of art, and it suggests implications in particular with respect to the role of the visual arts.

The first question raised by the statement art imitates nature is what is imitation? Murdoch offers two examples in an attempt to explain, namely the pure imitation of the human form as effected by the Greeks, and the imitation of painters, which transforms what is seen. Other questions arise, such as does abstract art imitate nature, and what does one really see? The discussion, therefore, focuses on the term "realism", which Murdoch feels describes the best variety of imitation. The upshot of this strand of the argument is that there are many ways of seeing, hence there are many realities, and literature should be free to include all of them: "Je suis de l'avis qu'une littérature libre est d'un grand secours à la societé parce qu'elle dit beaucoup de vérités et attire son attention sur beaucoup de chose qui autrement risqueraient de passer inaperçues."[5] In this respect, Murdoch is very close to Henry James, for his realism is not static, it changes from

novel to novel. One of the paradoxes suggested by "L'art est l'imitation de la nature" is one that James has also written about; that is, that each individual work of art ought to erect its own "normes de véracité"[6], for as James has put it:

> . . . there is no limit to what he [the novelist] may attempt as an executant -- no limit to his possible experiments, efforts, discoveries, successes. Here it is especially that he works, step by step, like his brother of the brush, of whom we may always say that he has painted his picture in a manner best known to himself.[7]

Each work of art, then, is individual. Murdoch continues by stating that art clings to that which is accidental, to contingency, to detail, to expressions of self, to all sorts of trickery, and especially to magic. Good art is true, bad art is false, as the vocabulary of critics suggests with words such as sentimental, pretentious, vulgar, superficial, and banal. Art is a battle between good and bad, and it is moral in that the artist is involved in the moral discipline of distancing fantasy and egotism. Imagination, which is displayed in art, is seeing that which is "other". Imagination is a type of freedom, it is an affirmation, a truth, and a means of communication. Since words are impregnated with values, language is a method of evaluation. Writing is a manner of judging, of evaluating the world. But most of all, art is natural and instinctive. Literature is perhaps the most natural art, for we each use words to speak: we are all story-tellers. As Henry James has stated, ". . . as a picture is reality, so the novel is history."[8]

The source of art is the unconscious, but Murdoch states that art is a battle against obsessional, unconscious forces. The artist is a cheater because he tries to hide his obsessions. The work of art is seductive in that it appears to unite the artist with the "client", but actually these two are natural enemies. The artist controls the work of art, but he cannot control the response to his art. Thus the piece may degenerate into a mere stimulus or outlet for the fantasies of both the artist and the "client". To focus on literature, the principle activity of the author involves creating characters. In unveiling his characters, the author manifests his sense of truth and justice. This tenet is reminiscent of earlier attempts by Murdoch to suggest the importance of a "Liberal theory of personality": "Literature must always represent a battle between real people and images; and what it requires now is a much stronger and more complex conception of the former."[9]

This discussion as a whole, then, sheds light on why Murdoch might wish to incorporate different combinations of arts in her novels. There is the possibility that such a wish is obsessional, but if this is so, she does not try to hide her obsession. She has said that "Art reveals reality and because there is a way in which things are there is a fellowship of artists."[10] The many varieties of reality that exist in the world, and that are expressed by artists, implies that the greater number of these realities evoked in

a work of art, the closer that work comes to realism, the highest form of imitation by Murdoch's standards. The arts in her novels also help us to judge the works objectively, for when Murdoch sets up a mirror to nature, she is also setting up a mirror to the reader by showing him characters who react to, for instance, paintings, sculpture, or music. In other words, she is providing the reader with the distinctions between good and bad responses to art in as visual a manner as possible.

Perhaps Murdoch's use of the fine arts represents an attempt to regain a confidence in language, which she feels writers such as James Joyce and Virginia Woolf have lost. She speaks of "l'erreur réaliste", which involves the illusion of seeing another world behind the words.[11] This lack of confidence in language has prompted Robert Scholes, in The Fabulators, to comment, "In the face of competition from cinema, fiction must abandon its attempt to 'represent reality' and rely more on the power of words to stimulate the imagination."[12] His chapter on Iris Murdoch features The Unicorn, a book in which he believes Murdoch is teaching us to read allegorically. Scholes' thesis is remarkably similar to the Platonic and Tolstoien desire to simplify literature to ". . . contes populaires, histoires morales, paraboles, fables, histoires claires sur des hommes bons, sur le bien et le mal."[13] If the cinema is the greatest competitor to literature, if people now are more interested in what they see, as opposed to what they read, then surely

concrete, visual metaphors in literature can meet the challenge of cinema.[14]

What must strike any reader of Iris Murdoch's novels is the power of the visual imagery. In a statement that suggests Julian Jaynes's theory of the origin of consciousness in the breakdown of the bicameral mind, Murdoch makes an observation about human consciousness that applies to her art as well as to her philosophy:

> The development of consciousness in human beings is inseparably connected with the use of metaphor. Metaphors are not merely peripheral decorations or even useful models, they are fundamental forms of our awareness of our condition: metaphors of space, metaphors of movement, metaphors of vision.[15]

Frank Baldanza has noted that there are more metaphors of vision than metaphors of movement in her novels.[16] I would add that some of the most important metaphors of vision are associated with the fine arts and the decorative arts.

An equally important visual metaphor, that of water, accompanies the art-related imagery in practically every one of Murdoch's novels. Jake Donaghue's comment as he stands before the fountain de Médicis: "There is something compelling about the sound of a fountain in a deserted place. It murmurs about what things do when no one watches them. It is the hearing of an unheard sound,"[17] combines the visual with the aural, sculpture with the sound that water makes as it rises out of the fountain. This type of imagery recurs, for example, when Dora Greenfield is reminded of the young David

of Donatello as she secretly watches Toby, who stands naked by the lake. But the arts are not necessarily literally accompanied by incidents involving various bodies of water in all the novels. Jake's swim in the Thames, and the punting scenes in An Accidental Man and Henry and Cato lack direct allusions to art. The presence of such scenes, however, provides avenues of comparison between natural and art-related imagery.

Jany Watrin has voiced the opinion that the water imagery is often ambiguous in Murdoch's novels, except in A Fairly Honourable Defeat, where "This imagery is particularly successful because water tests and reveals the characters' ability to come to terms with contingent reality."[18] It is perhaps an unfortunate sign of the times that the swimming pool (which figures in A Fairly Honourable Defeat) is seen as a more successful image of water than, say, the tide rolling into Gunnar's cave in The Nice and the Good, for water in the Murdoch canon is quite simply a metaphor for nature in the same way that painting is a metaphor for the other arts. Just as other arts such as music and sculpture sometimes accompany painting in the novels, so gardens and animals join the water imagery. There is little doubt though that images of painting and of water recur more frequently, and with more symbolic and dramatic force, than the other arts and other forms of nature respectively. Nor do the scenes mentioned above, as well as other scenes by water in Murdoch's oeuvre,

compete with the art-related images; rather, they reinforce them, for just as the arts form a harmonious collaboration in the novels, so the art world and the natural world come together to shape Iris Murdoch's brand of realism. The Nice and the Good, which will be discussed in the second chapter of this paper, provides perhaps the clearest example of this collaboration between art and nature, for the symbolic value of the seascape complements that of the central painting, Bronzino's Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time. Both images work together to comment upon the theme of love, sexual and spiritual, in The Nice and the Good. That water is a metaphor for nature, then, is most clearly perceived when it is combined with or related to art.

The question that one member of the seminar at the university of Caen asked Miss Murdoch must be asked here as well: art may imitate nature, but what of Oscar Wilde's contention that nature imitates art? This is Murdoch's reply:

> . . . Nature imitates Art both in the sense that we are bestowing meaning upon Nature which we then rediscover in Nature, perhaps with surprise; and also that people can, consciously or unconsciously, be influenced by aesthetic images. . . but although it's true that Nature imitates Art, Nature is very much larger than Art and is going to have the last word . . . the artist must always be readjusting what he says, the good artist is learning the whole time by looking at the world. One can see this in the work of a painter . . . .[19]

What follows is an observation about the differences between the young and old self-portraits of Rembrandt. She senses that the great painter had learned by observing nature. Thus the writer, like the painter, is constantly readjusting his vision.

This thesis suggests that she learned the same lesson as Rembrandt. Although her interest in human nature remains constant, Murdoch's vision shifts to give an increasingly important role to the physical and animal aspects of nature as the novels progress. Since this progress is roughly a linear one, it seems appropriate to begin my paper with a study of The Flight from the Enchanter, a novel in which both good art and nature play a relatively minor role.

A reading of The Philosopher's Pupil, however, advances the notion that nature does in fact have the last word in the novels of Iris Murdoch. If one focuses particularly on water imagery, as I do, it becomes evident that this type of imagery takes on greater proportions, both in terms of the number of references as well as in symbolic value. The trials by water in Under the Net appear harmless, even cathartic, but these become increasingly threatening in subsequent novels. The landscape of The Unicorn is a brooding one. The bog lies waiting to suck Effingham into its depths. The tide rises in Gunnar's Cave in The Nice and the Good, and nearly drowns Pierce and Ducane. Flooding is introduced in Bruno's Dream. Arrowby swims in dangerous waters off his coast, as if to tease the sea into destructiveness. What becomes apparent, however, is that the force of nature gives individuals the power to see while in its perilous clutches. Effingham's brush with death in the bog is epiphanic: "This then was love, to look and look until one exists no more, this was the love which was the same

as death."[20] Here he understands a little more about Hannah, in much the same way that Paula, in The Nice and the Good, learns about Richard Biranne through the Bronzino painting. If nature starts having the last word in the later novels of Iris Murdoch, perhaps it is because individuals have not learned enough from paintings, and require a sterner voice than the "kindly and yet sovereign tones" of the pictures Dora marvels at in the National Gallery.

CHAPTER I

The Flight from the Enchanter: Photographic Realism and the Sister Arts

The Flight from the Enchanter (1956) is Iris Murdoch's second novel, but it is the first to adopt the omniscient narrative point of view that characterizes the majority of her novels, and indeed the majority of the novels considered in this thesis. The quest/flight motif of Jake Donaghue in Under the Net alternatively fleeing and pursuing Hugo Belfounder and Anna Quentin is magnified in The Flight, and involves most of the characters. Mischa Fox, a figure who could have starred in one of Belfounder's Phantasifilm animal pictures, is the "alien god" from whom or to whom the individuals in The Flight are running. He is the enchanter, but the characters themselves, not Iris Murdoch, have set him up as such. In effect, each person in The Flight becomes a type of enchanter by virtue of the private fairytale each tries to make his life into. These personal fantasies are often revealed to the reader, if not to the character himself, in photographs and objets d'art.

As Howard German observes in his article entitled "Allusions in the Early Novels of Iris Murdoch," the scenes on the tapestries at Mischa's house reiterate the quest/flight motif in the novel, as well as reinforce some of the fairytale allusions which abound. The tapestries serve also as curtains

which are lifted for theatrical effect to display most of the major characters gathered around Mischa. The house party is perhaps the only instance in the novel in which Fox may be legitimately called enchanter. His command silences the guests after the disaster with the fishbowl, and he stands "like a priest" as each person deposits a dead fish in the bowl that contained the biscuits. The scene resembles, in reverse, the biblical passage in which Christ feeds a multitude with fish and bread from a small basket that had barely enough to feed a few.

Visual effects are prominent in The Flight. A flash of light near the beginning of the novel, when Rosa Keepe is at the Lusiewicz brothers' apartment, is thought to be an electrical problem, but later Rosa discovers that it was Calvin Blick's camera flash. The Lusiewicz brothers' mother, their earth goddess, sits silently in an alcove of the flat like a broken statue, which suggests that she is an extension of the empty bedframe that sits in the middle of their place. Calvin Blick's card-trick showmanship when displaying pornographic photographs from the "family album" provides a friendly diversion at his meeting with Hunter Keepe, editor of The Artemis, a suffragette paper that Calvin is coercing Hunter to sell to Mischa Fox. The same diversion is used at Fox's party to intimidate Hunter, and later at Mischa's villa in Italy, where Blick uses an incriminating photograph to prevent Rosa from staying with Mischa.

The Flight is a crystalline novel in the sense that

the quest/flight theme touches all of the characters, and in Dickensian fashion, major characters in The Flight are sometimes imitated by diminutive versions of themselves, usually for comic effect. Rosa Keepe and Miss Casement both work at menial jobs, but are capable of more intellectual work. Their names link them, for Casement is a less romantic variation on Keepe, which connotes imprisonment, and which is appropriate to the enchantment motif. While Rosa seems to be fleeing from Mischa, a former suitor, she is actually pursuing him, and at the end of the novel dramatically boards a train to his Italian estate, for there Mischa will somehow "decide her fate". In a reversal of this major quest/flight sequence, Miss Casement pursues her boss, Rainborough, in a calculated manner, but he manages an escape at the last possible moment with the help of a deus ex machina in the form of Marcia Cockeyne. It is tempting to see this part of the story as a mirror image of the one involving Rosa and Mischa.

Miss Casement is an artificial imitation of Rosa, and the most amusing suggestion to this effect is the focus Murdoch places on their hair. Both women have dark hair, but Rosa's is long and naturally wavy, and attracts everyone's attention. Even Annette Cockeyne cannot help drawing the "heavy dark cascade" into her lap and admiring it, as she admires her collection of unset jewels. Rainborough, who loves Rosa's hair as well, is fascinated, but replulsed, by

Agnes Casement's: "Miss Casement was shaking out her hair. The dark curls sprang to their stations. In a moment the whole mass had been released, not to ripple freely down [her] back but to protrude stiffly in pre-destined undulations."[1]

The Flight from the Enchanter is an appropriate starting point for an examination of metaphors of vision in the novels of Iris Murdoch, for this novel not only employs visual arts and visual effects, but also these become metaphors of vision itself, or, more particularly, metaphors of failure in vision. What is atypical about the book is that, as Frank Baldanza concludes, many of the thematic tensions in the novel are left ". . . as unresolved as they are in reality."[2] More specifically, the lack of resolution in The Flight is derived from the reality depicted in the book itself. In other words, The Flight ends with failure in vision, as well as the promise of other such failures. The themes that Mr. Baldanza summarizes, the themes of the alien god, of evil, of quest/flight and metamorphosis, arise out of the fantasies of the characters, fantasies which they do not wish to relinquish wholly at the end of the novel. Peter Saward's remark on the closing page, "'One reads the signs as best one can, and one may be totally misled,'" (284) is as uncomforting as it is portentious. The lack of resolution in The Flight, then, is the result of a failure to see on the part of the characters, for as Iris Murdoch has

pointed out: "Our minds are continuously active, fabricating an anxious, usually self-preoccupied, often falsifying veil which partially conceals the world."[3] This chapter deals with visual imagery associated with the failure to pull back the veil and see fully.

The concept of seeing is common to all of Murdoch's novels, and there seems to be a progress in most of her books from a position of not seeing to one of seeing. At the end of Under the Net, for instance, Jake comments:

> I had no longer any picture of Anna. She faded like a sorcerer's apparition; and yet somehow her presence remained to me, more substantial than before. It seemed as if, for the first time, Anna really existed now as a separate being and not as part of myself. To experience this was extremely painful.[4]

Paradoxically, seeing, or understanding, here involves losing a picture of the individual. This does not happen in The Flight, for we are left with Peter Saward comforting Rosa Keepe with Mischa Fox's childhood photo album. These pictures are offered as consolation, and thus may refuel Rosa's imagination with respect to the god-figure she has just flown from for a second time.

The idea of seeing, then, is of vital importance in Murdoch's aim to create a "Liberal theory of personality", ". . . a theory of man as free and separate and related to a rich and complicated world from which, as a moral being, he has much to learn."[5] A failure in vision may be traced in Annette Cockeyne's misguided sense of freedom as she leaves

Ringenhall for the School of Life.[6] On her way out, she glances around the school: "Annette stared at it all. It looked to her the same, and yet different. It was as if she had walked through the looking-glass. She realized that she was free." (7) This scene is a dramatization of Iris Murdoch's definition of the false, popular side of freedom:

> Freedom is, I think, a mixed concept. The true half of it is simply a name of an aspect of virtue concerned especially with the clarification of vision and the domination of selfish impulse. The false and more popular half is the name for the self-assertive movements of deluded selfish will which because of our ignorance we take to be something autonomous.[7]

At the end of the novel Annette has learned as little from the School of Life as she learned from Ringenhall. The indulgent chandelier swing, as well as the two attempts at suicide, the first in an effort to win the attention of Mischa Fox by the sea, the second during a party she herself organized,simply show a progress in self-indulgence. We catch our last glimpse of Annette in a train in the company of her parents. Wearing her favourite white sapphire, the only gem salvaged from the aborted attempt to cast the precious collection into the Thames, she gazes out the window at the landscape. Instead of really observing the land and the people, "She looked upon them all enchanted, lips parted and eyes wide. It was like being at the pictures." (279) Annette seems prepared to look outwardly for the first time, but the reference to film, in this instance, indicates that she cannot abandon a fictional, fairytale existence. As her father begins

to explain about the Roman aquaduct she notices, ". . . already she was no longer listening. Soon, soon, soon she would see Nicholas. She would have a lot to tell him." (280) The chapter ends, therefore, with Annette fleeing to an image of self, for she and Nicholas look alike, and we recall that earlier in the novel she was gazing at a recent photograph of her brother "as into a mirror".

The allusion to Through the Looking Glass in the opening scene of The Flight must be noted, for it sets up the idea of the mirror world for Annette, and by implication, if her prominent position at the beginning of the novel is symbolic for the rest of the characters in the novel. The end of the first chapter satisfies the reader that the Alice allusion is important:

> It was beginning to rain. Annette shot round the corner from Queen's Gate at a considerable pace backwards, looking at a black man. Then she turned and pelted along Kensington High Street. She wanted to get home quickly and change and be ready to break the news to Rosa. 'I'm the boss now,' said Annette out loud as she ran past Barker's. Two ladies who were passing stared at her in amazement. Her eyes and her mouth were wide open and her petticoats were spinning like a Catherine-wheel. Trying to kick up her heels behind her like a horse, she nearly fell flat on her nose. (11)

This passage indicates that Annette is bound to the mirror world, for she runs backwards as one would in such a world, The description of her eyes, mouth, petticoats and legs is practically a verbal expression of John Tenniel's drawing of Alice running hand in hand with the Queen in Through the

Looking Glass:

Fig. 1 Alice with the Red Queen

Annette's love of running is perhaps a realization that in the mirror world she must run as fast as possible ". . . to keep in the same place."[8] Her commitment to this world is confirmed later in the novel, when she sees Mischa Fox for the first time. She is staring into the dressmaker's mirror: "Annette felt like a queen in her green dress, and it did not occur to her to turn to face him. She merely watched his reflection curiously as he approached." (76) Alice's progress in the looking-glass world involves chess manoeuvres which elevate her from pawn to queen, thus Annette's view of herself as queen, and her refusal to turn around and look at Mischa properly testify that she is fully entrenched in the mirror world.

It is fitting that she meet Mischa at Nina's, for Annette feels like the boss there. Her false interpretation

of freedom as service from other people ("There is no feeling Annette liked so much as the feeling that someone else was making or doing something for her the fruits of which she would soon enjoy " (73)) traps her in the embarrassing position of being observed by someone she cannot herself see. This resembles the picture above, for Alice is not the boss; the Queen relentlessly pulls the girl along. It is also a reversal of Alice's invisible position before the Red King and the Red Queen at the outset of Through the Looking Glass.

Although Annette may have created a looking-glass landscape for herself, she lacks the imaginative curiosity of Alice, for she is too concerned with herself. She is a false Alice, just as she is a false refugee. Annette feels sorry for herself at the hotel party, and announces to her guests: "'Cam' Hill Square isn't my home. I have no home. I'm a refugee!'" (245) She then proceeds to try to kill herself by taking an overdose of Milk of Magnesia pills, while staring at herself in the mirror. This scene is the comic counterpart to Nina's successful suicide, Nina, the real refugee who has no identity (we are never given her surname, and her proper name simply means "girl" in Spanish), stares at her passport, which is "like a death warrant" (259), once she receives a letter from the Home Office that she thinks heralds the end of her stay in England. The passport

> . . . filled her with shame and horror. She took

> it in her hand and it fell open at the picture of herself. It was an old picture taken in the worst days of her fear. At the Nina whose hair was golden a younger black-haired Nina stared back, anxious, haggard and fearful. Here was her very soul upon record, stamped and filed; a soul without a nationality, a soul without a home. (259-260)

She jumps out the window when even religion is lost to her as she looks at the wooden crucifix she had forgotten to pack and sees it for the first time as just a man ". . . hanging most painfully from his hands." (262) Annette is surrounded by people who are prepared to care for her, or at least to pay attention to her when she needs help. Nina, by contrast, is utterly alone, and the crucifix is not powerful enough to save her. Calvin Blick reproaches Rosa for not listening to Nina, for not calming her fears, for, " . . . 'After all, it's England. It's like the Duchess in Alice. No one really gets beheaded.'" (275)

On a more general level, though, the allusions to Alice and Through the Looking Glass represent a way of enlisting the aid of another work of art to clarify meaning in The Flight. Lewis Carroll's fairytale, however, does not simply consist of words, for John Tenniel's drawings accompany the text, and provide an example of the harmonious relationship between pictures and words. Alice asks at the outset of Alice in Wonderland: "What is the use of a book without pictures or conversation?" Not surprisingly, then, the Alice books have pictures as well as conversation, and as Wendy Steiner has pointed out, the text itself directs

the reader to the drawings: "'(If you don't know what a Gryphon is, look at the picture.)'"[9] When Iris Murdoch alludes to Alice's adventures, therefore, she is also calling to mind a tradition of the sister arts. This is entirely appropriate to a novel which offers its own example of the sister arts in the Kastanic script, and to an author who approaches the sister arts tradition in her oeuvre by using works of art as metaphors of vision.

The Kastanic script is an internal symbol in The Flight, an image of the process Murdoch aims to complete by using metaphors of vision. The pre-Babylonian script is undeciphered at the outset of the novel. The signs provide simply a visual experience, but by the end of the book a bilingual tablet is uncovered, and some of the language of the script is deciphered. The symbols that were once arranged in unrelated pictorial configurations take on a definite verbal meaning. What Peter thought was poetry was actually a series of accounts of battles, but even these accounts aid in piecing together a picture of the civilization that produced the script. Words and pictures, then, work together to inform each other in the sense that Henry James suggests in The Art of Fiction, as well as perhaps in the ideal sense that Jean Hagstrum calls interpenetration when he refers to the emblem poetry of the seventeenth-century. The process of the unconscious working towards the conscious, a process which involves moving from visualizing to verbalizing, is

the process involved in decoding the Kastanic script, but it is also the process involved in writing a novel.

The undeciphered script is also a metaphor for the inscrutable Mischa Fox. We see him only as the characters in The Flight see him, and thus he remains totally inscrutable, like the Kastanic script, for most of the book. The childhood photographs which he keeps with Peter Saward, the historian who diverts his attention from pre-Babylonian empires to the study of the script, are analogues for the bilingual tablet that sheds light on the ancient language. Mischa warns Peter to leave off his obsession with the undeciphered script, as he will never decode it, but Saward cannot stop indulging this obsession, just as he cannot stop trying to interpret Mischa Fox's behaviour:

> Mischa was a problem which, he felt, he would never solve -- and this although he had got perhaps more data for its solution than any other living being. Yet it seemed that the more Mischa indulged his impulse to reveal himself in these unexpected ways to Peter, the more puzzling he seemed to become. (202)

Thus, Saward is left shifting his gaze from Mischa's blue eye to his brown eye, in an attempt to see beyond the knowledge Fox provides him with. Similarly, Peter tries to explain, or interpret, the impact of the deciphered script to Rosa instead of accepting the appearance of the bilingual tablet as the disappearance of his obsession with decoding the Kastanic script.

There are even more literal images of failure to see in The Flight from the Enchanter. Descriptions of eyes, for

instance, are connected with themes in the novel. A description of Annette Cockeyne's self-induced comas at Ringenhall offers the first metaphor for blindness and self-generated enchantment experienced by each individual in The Flight:

> To do this she would let her jaw fall open and concentrate her attention upon some object in the near vicinity until her eyes glazed and there was not a thought in her head. After some time, however, she discontinued this practice, not because the tutors began to think that she was not right in the head -- this merely amused her -- but because she discovered that she was able by this means to make herself fall asleep, and this frightened her very much indeed. (7)

It is ironic that Annette, as well as other characters, fears enchantment, but nonetheless pursues it by electing Mischa Fox as god. Iris Murdoch sheds light on this paradox in an interview with Michael O. Bellamy:

> I think people create myths about themselves and are then dominated by the myths. They feel trapped, and they elect other people to play roles in their lives, to be gods or destroyers or something, and I think that this mythology is often very deep and very influential and secretive, and a novelist is revealing secrets of this sort.[10]

The theme of good and evil may be visualized in Mischa Fox's different coloured eyes, one blue, the other brown. Calvin Blick represents his brown eye, for as Rainborough comments to Rosa, "'Blick is the dark half of Mischa Fox's mind.'" (30) That Blick is an extension of Fox's mind is further emphasized by Calvin's own eyes, his ". . . pale eyes whose colour no one could ever remember." (12) Many such pairings are possible in The Flight, for the characters

often literally see themselves in other people's eyes. Rosa notices a resemblance between herself and Mischa: "Rosa looked at him. It was like looking into a mirror. It was as if her own spirit had imprinted itself upon him as they embraced and now looked back at her wide-eyed." (236) In a darker way, Hunter Keepe's encounter with Blick through a store window is similar:

> As he was about to replace the comb he saw something which chilled him with horror and made him pause and gape at his image in the glass.
> His features had changed. Another face, a familiar and dreaded one, had come to take the place of his own. He was looking straight into the eyes of Calvin Blick. (151)

Photography also provides literal metaphors of vision in The Flight. Indeed, photography is practically the only form of art to which most of the characters pay any attention. The pictures, however, are mere reflections of the characters themselves, not of an outward transcendent reality. The Flight uses a mechanical art to confirm the observation that, "We are largely mechanical creatures, the slaves of relentless strong selfish forces the nature of which we scarcely comprehend."[11] This is reinforced by references to Rosa Keepe at the machine she calls Kitty. Rosa had taken the job at the factory to be with the people, but ultimately she finds only Kitty, and the Lusiewicz brothers, who are very mechanical themselves. The brothers build an exercise machine by copying the design of one they observed in a store. This form of creation is imitation, in the same sense

that photographs imitate.

Not only is photography the only form of art that the characters attend to, but also photography represents practically the only visual art in The Flight. This is uncharacteristic of Murdoch's novels as a whole, for even her first, Under the Net, makes use of a variety of visual arts, including mime theatre, sculpture, and painting. Moreover, The Flight is perhaps the novel in Murdoch's oeuvre with the least number of allusions to the fine arts, which might lead one to conclude that the lack of good art in this second novel condemns the characters in it to a fairly dishonourable defeat, for there is nothing better than family photographs, pornographic or otherwise, to help the individual look outward, nothing that is except nature. Granted, Annette Cockeyne gazes at ". . . the watery reproductions of famous paintings" (7) at Ringenhall on her way out, but reproductions are mass-produced photographs, often very poor images of the great work of art. In Platonic language, reproductions are lower images of the higher form.

One may draw the analogy between the false art in The Flight as opposed to the good art in other novels by Murdoch with the concept of the fire and the sun which characterizes Plato's myth of the cave. Murdoch herself has turned to this myth on several occasions. I shall quote at length from her interpretation in "The Sovereignty of Good over Other Concepts" as it pertains to the idea of deluded

worship which is central to the theme of the alien god in The Flight:

> Plato has given us the image of this deluded worship in his great allegory. The prisoners in the cave at first face the back wall. Behind them a fire is burning in the light of which they see upon the wall the shadows of puppets which are carried between them and the fire and they take these shadows to be the whole of reality. When they turn round they can see the fire, which they have to pass in order to get out of the cave. The fire, I take it, represents the self, the old unregenerate psyche, that great source of energy and warmth. The prisoners in the second stage of enlightenment have gained the kind of self-awareness which is nowadays a matter of so much interest to us. They can see in themselves the source of what was blind selfish instinct. They see the flames which threw the shadows which they used to think were real, and they can see the puppets, imitations of things in the real world, whose shadows they used to recognize. They do not yet dream that there is anything else to see. What is more likely than that they should settle down beside the fire, which though its form is flickering and unclear is quite easy to look at and cosy to sit by?[12]

I am suggesting, then, that the response to photography in The Flight represents this settling down beside the fire, in much the same way as Peter Saward settles for the fire in attempting to decipher the Kastanic script. Note that Peter's room "[illegible] resembled an underground cavern." (19) The characters in The Flight cannot move beyond the photographs, just as Saward cannot lay aside the script. Annette Cockeyne cherishes a snapshot of her brother, Nicholas, who will listen to her adventures, but who will no doubt be thinking of his own. Nina's passport picture condemns her to death. Although she jumps into hazy sunshine, her moment of truth is confused

by her perception of the image of Christ, and the death becomes a flight from reality, as opposed to a step beyond an incomplete reality. Camilla Wingfield does not move beyond the old photographs of "Lust and Rage" she shows Rosa by purchasing the shares of The Artemis, for she merely attempts to recapture those moments before her death.

The falseness of the pictures on the photographs may not rest so much in the images themselves as in the mechanical process involved in producing them, for the eye of the camera reflects rather than receives. By contrast, art does not simply duplicate, it transforms, and

> Good art, thought of as symbolic force rather than statement, provides a stirring image of a pure transcendent value, a steady visible enduring higher good, and perhaps provides for many people, in an unreligious age without prayer or sacraments, their clearest experience of something grasped as separate and precious and beneficial and held quietly and unpossessively in attention. Good art which we love can seem holy and attending to it can be like praying.[13]

The central photograph in The Flight that must be considered in this way is the one taken by Calvin Blick of Rosa in the arms of the Lusiewicz brothers. The picture portrays Rosa sitting ". . . rigid, like a stone goddess" (69) on the mattress which lies outside the "enchanted enclosure" of the bedframe. Jan is lying with his head in her lap, holding her hair which falls over her breasts, as Stefan leans against her back,". . . his lips very close to her neck." (70) The three have their eyes closed, and resemble sleeping statues.[14] The pose is a visual expression of Rosa Keepe's ". . . cloudy

fatalism in which disgust and despair lay uneasily asleep." (53) The image itself is not pornographic; it is a type of dark eroticism (the black eros of The Black Prince) that suggests, if it does not completely imitate, art.

Blick tries to convince Hunter that the photograph of his sister is good: "'This seems to me to be a fuss about practically nothing. In that picture your sister is as beautiful as a princess and just as proper. It's a very fine photograph and not, if I may put it so, over-exposed!'" (158) Hunter himself thinks of the picture as a work of art: "He had not slept. The posed trio, which struck him hideously as a sort of pietà in reverse, which he had seen in the photograph haunted him throughout the night in various forms, sometimes still and sometimes diabolically animated." (162) Keepe, then, sees the picture as something sacrilegious, and it becomes a type of terrifying film clip to him.

Alain Robbe-Grillet has made the following statement about film, which applies equally well to photography in the context of The Flight:

> It may seem peculiar that such fragments of crude reality, which the filmed narrative cannot help presenting, strike us so vividly, whereas identical scenes in real life do not suffice to free us of our blindness. As a matter of fact, it is as if the very conventions of the photographic medium (the two dimensions, the black and white images, the frame of the screen, the difference of scale between scenes) help free us from our own conventions. The slightly "unaccustomed" aspect of this reproduced world reveals, at the same time, the unaccustomed character of the world that surrounds us: it, too, is unaccustomed insofar as it refuses to conform to our habits of apprehension and to our classification.[15]

The photograph of Rosa has the potential to work in this way. Certainly it is startling, but again, with respect to reactions to the photograph, the theme of failed vision is acted out in The Flight. Hunter and Rosa attempt to flee from the implications of the picture, and Hunter tries to buy the negative from Calvin in order to destroy the evidence against his sister. Rosa's coy remark to Peter Saward at the outset of the novel comes back to haunt her: "'Suppose you were just to see me for an instant as a door was closing, just like a snapshot. Wouldn't that be well worth ten hours' work?'" (36) Indeed it would.

It is the mechanical process associated with the creation of the photograph that lets the reader see the futility in hoping for some sort of dawning of awareness in the characters who come into contact with it. Calvin Blick's last-minute prank of having Hunter develop the picture is, by his own admission, theatrical. The dark room smells of science, and reminds Hunter of an operating theatre. The atmosphere and the actual procedure combine to produce an effect that is reminiscent of Frankenstein and Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, where the machinery, directed by a human being who himself becomes an automaton, is a type of monster with a lens for an eye, and an enlarger for a brain.

Calvin is the enchanter here, for he convinces Hunter that the camera lens is "'. . . the truthful eye that sees and remembers.'" (155) Later, however, he is more truthful

with Rosa, for he tells her that the photograph has no power, that the truth lies deeper than in mechanical devices: "'You will never know the truth, and you will read the signs in accordance with your deepest wishes. That is what we humans always have to do. Reality is a cipher with many solutions, all of them the right ones.'" (274) This is borne out by the fact that we are left towards the end of the novel with a delirious Hunter, who has forgotten the pietà picture, and who instead fears that Calvin is showing countless shots of Rosa dressed in black stockings. In other words, he is superimposing Rosa's face on the pornographic pictures Calvin showed him at the outset of the book, pictures of ". . . a well-proportioned girl dressed in a pair of black stockings and high-heeled shoes." (14)

Iris Murdoch has noted in "The Sovereignty of Good over Other Concepts" that the response to beauty in art is the same as the response to beauty in nature. The art in The Flight does not, and cannot, educate the characters, but neither can the natural world itself, for the individuals in this novel are either not exposed to nature, or they choose to ignore it. Much of the action takes place indoors in London. Natural worlds exist in a peripheral way in The Flight, and these are often artificial. The clothes in Nina's quarters are described as forest; Rainborough's backyard is walled-in and later destroyed in the same way that the moth is crushed under his foot after an unexpected visit from Mischa;[16] even

Mischa Fox's tropical fish bowl is an artificial environment for the fish.

Mischa Fox is the one character in this novel in whom the natural world is concentrated. He communes with animals more readily than with people. His objets d'art depict animals, or, as with the Netsuke, human beings with animals. Fox's surname supports the type of relationship he has with nature and with people, for it takes cunning to be famous for nothing in particular. He has an affinity for the sea, to which he turns for renewal, and just as no one manages to come very close to Mischa, so no one other than him learns from the sea or any other natural phenomena in The Flight. Annette throws herself into the water to capture Mischa's attention, not because, as some critics have noted, she is a mermaid who needs to wet her tail. Rosa Keepe's room at Fox's Italian villa obscures any clear vision of the sea. She looks out her window and sees "a square of landscape", and a portion of water which ". . . glowed like a great window of stained glass." (268) The landscape remains distant from her as in a picture. When she does catch a fuller glimpse of the topography from Mischa's perpective, she calls it beautiful, but Fox contradicts her, for it is a stark landscape. As she gazes at the ground and perceives many living creatures, Rosa cannot accept the sight as real: ". . . it seemed to her as if the whole scene had been conjured up by Mischa simply for her benefit. If she were to go away, all

this would vanish too." (269) Here her supreme egotism shines through, and culminates in the desire to grab the lizard that Mischa holds comfortably in his hands. Her awkwardness with the natural world is defined when the lizard escapes from her grasp, but leaves behind his tail, as a sort of indictment. This is a foreshadowing of Rosa's inability to join Mischa by the sea, of her inability to look at Fox for any length of time, even with the aid of binoculars.

Hannah Crean-Smith's pronouncement in The Unicorn could well apply to Mischa Fox, and by extension, to the natural world of The Flight:

> 'I lived in your gaze like a false God. But it is the punishment of a false God to become unreal. I have become unreal. You have made me unreal by thinking about me so much. You made me into an object of contemplation. Just like this landscape. I have made it unreal by endlessly looking at it instead of entering it!'[17]

The Unicorn reverses the order of events in The Flight, for Hannah's words could be uttered as a collective cry of all the characters in the earlier novel aimed at Mischa Fox, who is the false God and nature combined, made unreal by constant gazing. In The Unicorn, a sublime landscape overpowers the human world in a way unprecedented in any of the novels before it. The enchantment of the human world of delusion in The Flight is taken up by mountains, and above all, by bog, sea and salmon pools in The Unicorn. The landscape gains in importance to help shatter the fairytale world, which is far more intense in The Unicorn that in The Flight. Ironically, though, the landscape takes on the role of art.

As James Hall has noted with respect to the setting of The Unicorn: ". . . this landscape does not ask for assent to its physical presence; it intends rather to call up memories of Brontë and Cocteau movies . . . The novelist counts on us to say simultaneously, 'Wuthering Heights,' and 'frustrated will in retreat.'"[18]

The visual imagery associated with a failure in vision in The Flight has been traced to photographic images which simply reflect the egotistic concerns of the individuals in the novel. The photographs hold up a mirror to the self, to the nature of the particular group of human beings in this book. Whereas a writer like Alain Robbe-Grillet attempts to make the novel into a camera lens, Iris Murdoch uses the image of the camera lens metaphorically to mark the failure in vision on the part of her characters.

The photographs in The Flight represent the only visual works of art to speak of in the novel, but these are mechanical, and do not rise to the level of good art. The characters, therefore, have little opportunity of seeing beyond themselves, for they even ignore the other avenue of transcendence: nature. It remains for the novels following The Flight from the Enchanter to attempt to depict the beneficial function of good art, and of nature. Good art in these subsequent novels is often illustrated in images of paintings, for as Murdoch commented to one interviewer: ". . . Painting is the image of the spiritual life; the painter

really sees, and the veil is taken away."[19]

Even in An Unofficial Rose, a novel that approaches The Flight in its portrayal of failures in vision, the Tintoretto study at least affords the characters who come into contact with it an opportunity for transcendence. Hope springs from the fact that the picture finds its home at the National Gallery by the end of the book, for at the gallery, Hugh, who has relinquished possession of the valuable drawing, must learn to share the Tintoretto with a "knot of admirers". He must learn to look at the work of art, for he is "savaged by an attendant" for caressing it as he used to do at home. The picture's new home suggests the possibility that Hugh may learn that "The calm joy in the picture gallery is quite unlike the pleasurable flutter felt in the sale room,"[20] and by extension, in the drawing-room.

CHAPTER II

The Nice and the Good: The Gallery Hunters

If The Flight from the Enchanter represents a type of flight from art, The Nice and the Good, by contrast, depicts a pursuit of art. Elizabeth Dipple is correct in treating this novel as pivotal in Murdoch's oeuvre, and this is abundantly clear with respect to the role of art. Although it is not the first to allude to famous paintings, it is the first to use a work of art -- Bronzino's Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time -- ". . . on a more purely symbolic level. In fact, its allegorical form sets the stage for a series of particular allegorical events which are played out against an allegorical background, what W.H. Auden might have called a moral landscape."[1] The preface to this paper has already pointed out that works of art in the early novels are used primarily to gauge the responses of the characters. The Bronzino, by contrast, is central to The Nice and the Good in a way that moves beyond the Tintoretto study of the naked Susannah in An Unofficial Rose, and the religious icon in The Time of the Angels, and foreshadows the multiple effect of the tapestry of Athena and Achilles, Titian's "Death of Acteon," and the Max Beckmann allusions in Henry and Cato, which work together to describe Henry's progress through that novel.

Bronzino's Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time is also perhaps

the purest metaphor of vision in the novels of Iris Murdoch, for her sense that "the painter really sees, and the veil is taken away" is rendered visually by the painting. The figure Time actually pulls back a veil from Fraud, thus displaying Cupid and Venus' "butterfly kiss" as well as the figures Jealousy, Folly and Pleasure. The real nature of Pleasure, as Charles McCorquodale indicates, is revealed to the viewer, but not to Cupid and Venus, for Folly stands before Pleasure's "reptilian tail,"[2] which is bathed in light, as if to alert the onlooker.

The Nice and the Good provides a fine example for study based on two out of the eight approaches to the comparative arts suggested by Ulrich Weisstein, for this novel both describes a specific work of art and shares its themes or morals. The Nice and the Good offers no radical interpretation of Bronzino's allegory that might require "specialized art-historical knowledge"[3]. McCorquodale's suggested moral matches Paula's: ". . . the apparent sweetness of sensual love hides the stinging truth that its consequences are jealousy and fraud (or deceit); folly blinds us to this, but time inevitably reveals it to be true."[4]

Although many critics suggest Murdoch's interest in exploring the theme of love in this novel, few make any distinction between erotic and spiritual love. Theo is correct in stating that all the inhabitants of Trescombe House are ". . . sex maniacs and they don't even know it,"[5] for the

emphasis in The Nice and the Good is on sexuality, hence the centrality of Bronzino's painting, which Richard Biranne describes as "'. . . a real piece of pornography. . . There's the only real kiss ever presented in a picture. A kiss and not a kiss.'" (142) The climactic scene in Gunnar's Cave, on the other hand, provides the complement to erotic love in the novel. Although Pierce has entered the cave out of frustrated sexual desire for Barbara (Kate and Octavian's daughter), he emerges from the ordeal a maturer, more balanced individual. Ducane's act of love in rescuing Pierce not only saves the boy, but also establishes the relationships that form his eventual ready-made family in Mary Clothier and her son. Unlike the symbolic impact of the Bronzino painting on The Nice and the Good as a whole, however, the symbolism of the cave incident is local. The scene itself is extremely powerful, though, and may be said to mark the culmination of much of the natural imagery in the novel. Although more attention will be paid to Bronzino's painting, The Nice and the Good is pivotal, too, in striking a balance between a natural rural setting and an art-filled urban one.

The allegory of Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time even extends to The Nice and the Good as detective novel, for Ducane, who becomes the detective figure, may be compared with the figure Time, who pulls the veil from Fraud, alias Richard Biranne,for the purposes of the analogy. Biranne has created the mystery by removing Radeechy's incriminating suicide note,

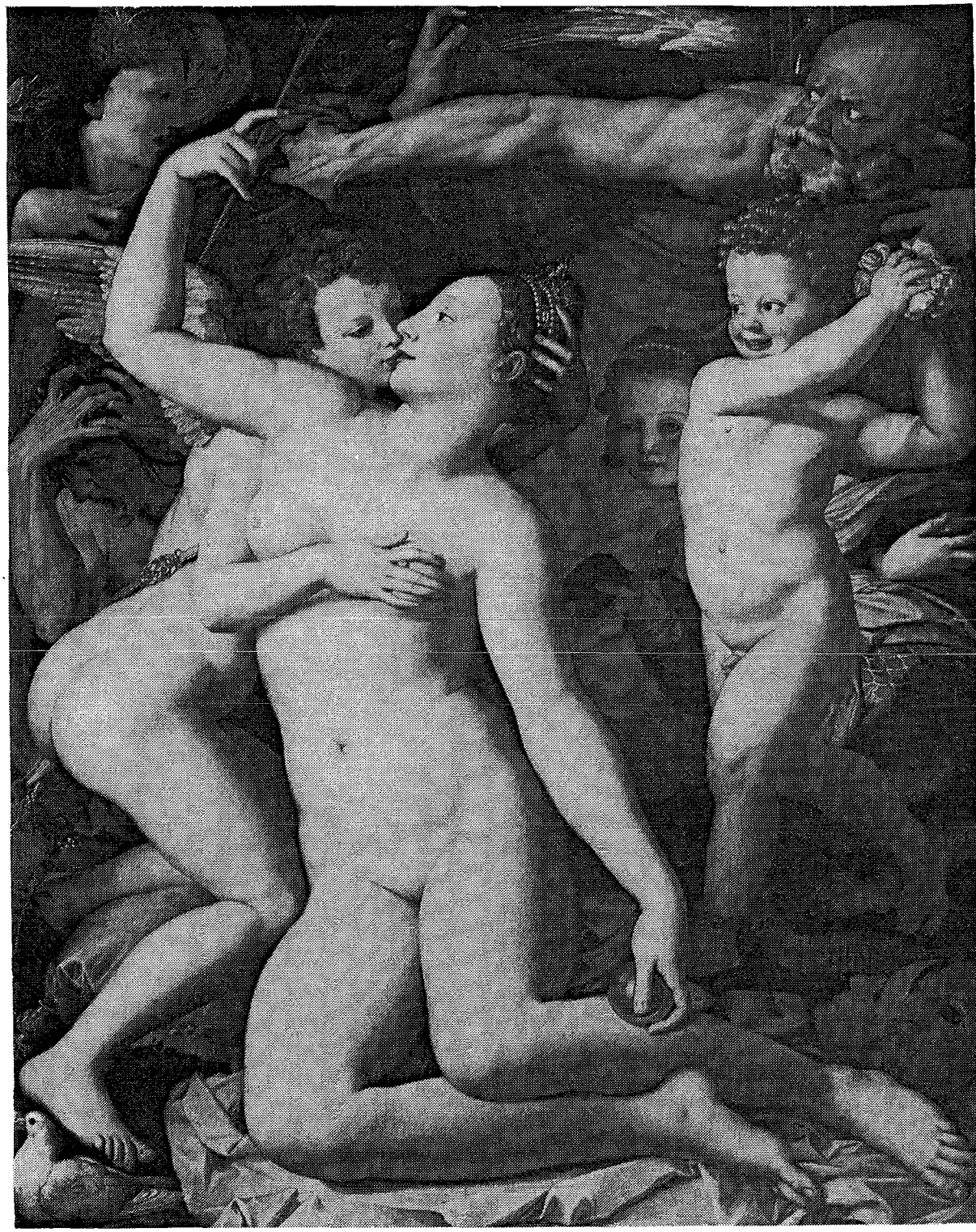

Fig. 2 Bronzino, An Allegory of Venus and Cupid, London, National Gallery

which relates in concise and rational language Richard's deceit. Radeechy killed himself after having killed his wife in Biranne's presence, for he was jealous of the affair Richard carried on with her. As the story progresses, it is only a matter of time before the sordid rituals Radeechy conducted beneath the office building he shared with Octavian Gray and Biranne are revealed. McGrath, the seedy informant (a Calvin Blick type), leads Ducane, first to his wife, Judy McGrath -- alias Helen of Troy -- who tries to seduce him, and second to the site of the rituals, where Radeechy enacted his dark myticism, a corrupt and selfish pleasure that parodies Theo's deep commitment to Buddhism.

It is interesting to note that photographs are used in The Nice and the Good, as they were in The Flight, to serve as evidence against an individual. The photographs in this case, however, take on a greater significance when compared with the observations Paula makes about Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time, the second time she sees it. Ducane uses police photographs of Radeechy's dead body to determine that someone had tampered with the body, for the revolver bearing Radeechy's fingerprints was replaced incorrectly by the dead man's right hand. Radeechy, who did actually commit suicide, was left-handed. The second time Paula describes the Bronzino painting, she notices, for the first time, that Pleasure's right hand is on the left arm, and the left hand on the right arm. Paula, who was introduced to the painting by her former

husband Richard Biranne, gains a greater understanding of the man and her relations with him by studying the allegory. What is ironic is that he was responsible for misplacing the revolver by Radeechy's right hand. Although she is unaware of the details of the case, Paula is aware of Richard's deceit. This is conveyed to the reader directly, but also indirectly when she notes the reversed hands in the painting.

Although, as others have noted, the detective story unites the cast of characters, the greater part of The Nice and the Good is focused on the private lives of the figures involved in the case, The allegory within an allegory that Michael Birdsall notes is clearly evident in the many couplings in the novel that result in pleasure, deceit, folly and jealousy. The Biranne twins, Henrietta and Edward, are significantly male and female. As an only child, Iris Murdoch has admitted a fascination for twins, ". . . the lost other person whom one is looking for."[6]

Although the twins stand as possibly the only good characters in this novel,[7] the majority of pairings are chiefly couplings that rarely rise above "the nice": Barbara and Pierce lose their virginity together in a sequence that is highly comical; Willy Kost is accosted by a determined Jessica in an equally comic attempt on Willy's part to avoid a second test of his virility; Paula and Richard Biranne come together again before the Bronzino, but rush out of the gallery to recreate the ". . . image of beauty, idleness, sexuality

and luxuria"[8] conveyed by the painting; Mary Clothier and John Ducane find each other on a less sexual level, but on one that nevertheless involves the body. The narrator, in tones reminiscent of George Eliot, reminds the reader that

> Each human being swims within a sea of faint suggestive imagery. It is this web of pressures, currents and suggestions, something often so much less definite than pictures, which ties our fugitive present to our past and future, composing the globe of consciousness. We think with our body, with its yearnings and its shrinkings and its ghostly walkings. (334)

Kate and Octavian Gray have set up a pseudo-utopic society at Trescombe House, a pastoral Victorian retreat in Dorset, in which most of the characters mentioned above are united at the outset of the novel. Kate is a good example of the confident Venus, who clutches her golden apple in Bronzino's allegory. A good insight into her self-satisfied, sensual nature is provided in a scene by the seashore, in which Kate revels in the pleasant sensation of cool water caressing her warm ankles. She notes the "heavenly blue" of the sea, which is " . . . not a dark blue at all, but like a cauldron of light." (124) Kate would like to swim in the colour of this sea, a colour that matches the luxuriant and luminous blue of the veil in Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time. Her confidence extends to her relationship with Octavian, and he allows his wife to think she controls his behaviour by describing her own sexual escapades with other men. They discuss, in one instance, her loosely-veiled jealousy for Mary Clothier. Nowhere in the novels of Iris Murdoch is the marriage

bed so hilariously mechanical: Octavian's ritual question, "'Are you ready, darling?'", and Kate's habitual reply, "'Ready, sweetheart'" serve as foreplay. In no other case in this novel does deceit become "nice" (in Jane Austen's sense of the word), for there is poetic justice in Octavian's secret affair with his secretary.

Before examining the direct influence of the Bronzino allegory on Paula Biranne and her former husband, Richard, the relationship between John Ducane and Jessica Bird should be considered, for the result of their relations -- Jessica's jealousy, and Ducane's deceit -- make a comparison between Ducane and Biranne possible. Both men admire painting. Richard's tastes are described via Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time, but Ducane's are established through his relations with Jessica, a teacher of painting and English. The austerity of her apartment alienates her from John, and gives the reader a sense of her limitations:

> . . . Jessica's room was naval in its austerity. No homely litter of books or papers proclaimed its inhabitant and the pattern of clean hard colours and shapes was not merged into any human mess or fuzz. If furniture is handy man-adjusted objects for sitting, lying, writing, putting, the room contained no furniture, only surfaces. . . Formica shelves, impersonal as coffee bar tops, supported entities, neither ornaments nor works of art, which Jessica made or found. She wandered the rubbish tips at night, bringing back bricks, tiles, pieces of wood, tangles of wire, Sometimes they were allowed to remain themselves. . . These objects, standing inscrutably in rows, often seemed to Ducane to belong to a series the principle of which he had not grasped. They were not intended for contemplation and were soon destroyed. (25-26)

Jessica even extends this influence beyond her apartment, for she insists that her students, children who sometimes wish to show the fruits of their labours to parents, destroy what they make in the classroom. One child gains Jessica's approval for realizing that what they do in her classroom is all play. This work for "immediate and ephemeral artistic activity" (82) may be likened to the immediate sexual gratification depicted in Bronzino's allegory of Cupid and Venus.

Ducane's expensive gifts, objets d'art, look alien and "surrealist" in Jessica's apartment. She mistrusts his attempts to ". . . persuade her to work in permanent materials. She saw him as corrupted, fascinating, infinitely old." (26) We discover that "she kept her world denuded out of fear of convention," (82) and that she gleaned no knowledge of the history of painting or any "positive central bent or ability" while at art school. Murdoch tells us that Jessica's ". . . morality lacked coherent motives," that "she even became used to making love in the presence of third and fourth parties, not out of any perversity, but as a manifestation of her freedom." (82) She feels that John's taste in art is insincere and promiscuous, for "It appeared that he liked almost everything! He liked Giotto and Piero and Tintoretto and Titian and Rubens and Rembrandt and Velazquez and Tiepolo and Ingres and Renoir and Matisse and Bonnard and Picasso!" (83) This list represents a good description of the artists Iris Murdoch herself favours in her novels, but Jessica's shock at Ducane's

"catholic" taste reveals her narrowness. It is no wonder then that when Ducane tries to think of her in the later stages of the novel, when he is being blackmailed by McGrath, "his thoughts of Jessica, though violent, were all as it were in monochrome." (271) By contrast, his thoughts of Judy McGrath (Biranne's lover) are vivid and suggest the figure of Venus in Bronzino's painting: "But the beautiful stretched-out body of Judy, its apricot colour, its glossy texture, its weight, continued to haunt him. . . ." (271) Earlier, when Judy offered him her body, Ducane saw it as ". . . like something in a picture. Possibly she had actually reminded him of some picture by Goya or Velazquez." (250) Through temptations of this sort, Ducane moves towards an understanding of Richard Biranne, for John concludes that "There is a logic in evil, and [he] felt himself enmeshed in it." (271)

Paula's experience before Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time is not transcendent in the same way that Dora's experience before the Gainsborough was in The Bell. What Paula learns is less spiritual, more earthly, than what Dora perceives. Both women feel love, but Paula's reaction is not as religious as Dora's. This may have something to do with the fact that Paula is more intellectual than Dora, but it is also a function of the paintings themselves involved. Bronzino's allegory appeals to the intellect, but Gainsborough's picture of his two daughters, who ". . . step through the wood hand in hand, their garments shimmering, their eyes serious and dark, their

two pale heads, round full of buds, like yet unlike,"[9] appeals more to the emotions, and I suspect, to Dora's maternal instinct. Paula thinks about Bronzino's painting twice in The Nice and the Good. The second description marks a shift in perspective that indicates a positive, objective, yet feeling, progress in awareness. Although the experience is not transcendent, it does involve looking outward and accepting another human being, no faults excepted. I might add, too, that Paula becomes a fuller, more independent character as a result of her growing awareness of the painting. As intellectual as Biranne, she seemingly drifts through the landscape at other times, but we see her more clearly, as a person with needs and desires, when she sits before Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time.

Just prior to Paula's first description of the Bronzino painting, she, Mary Clothier and Kate are walking by the seashore, each wrapped in thought. Paula's thoughts are connected to the painting in as much as they are concerned with the past, with her adulterous relationship with Eric, who at this juncture has threatened to come back to her. Eric, whose name calls to mind Wagner's opera, The Flying Dutchman,[10] is indeed sailing back; but fortunately for her, he, like the flying Dutchman, will go on always, for he meets and falls in love with a girl whose father is ". . . a big man in the art world." (285) Paula's thoughts on her duty to the past prefigures her inevitable reconciliation with Richard via the

Bronzino: "But one must do something about the past. It doesn't just cease to be. It goes on existing and affecting the present, and in new and different ways, as if in some other dimension it too were growing." (122) Apart from shedding light on Paula's sentiments about the episode in the past concerning Eric, whom Richard badly injured,[11] this passage suggests the permanence of good art, in Murdoch's words, "the steady visible enduring higher good," which goes on existing and affecting the present.

The same three women, Paula, Mary and Kate go to London together shortly after the seaside walk. Just as their thoughts on the earlier occasion had turned to separate concerns, so their errands in the city differ greatly. Mary, who has decided to take Willy Kost away with her, must first revisit the house she once shared with Alistair. Kate, on the pretext of leaving something for Ducane, sizes up Fivey, John's eccentric manservant, and indulges in a little afternoon delight of slivovitz and sex. Paula has decided to go to the National Gallery after a day of shopping. Burdened with memories of Eric, at first vague: "Eric slowly, slowly moving towards her like a big black fly crawling over the surface of the round world," (142) then increasingly specific: "Paula had an image of Eric's hands. He had strange square hands with very broad flattened fingers and long silky golden hair which grew not only on the back of the palm but well down to the second finger joint," (142) she walks through the gal-

lery, evidently moving closer and closer to Bronzino's Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time. Her thoughts increasingly turn to Richard, until, standing before the picture, she stops, as if halting at the thought of his name, "Richard" . Sitting in the middle of the room, she takes in the details of the painting, recalling that it ". . . had become the symbol of their courtship." (143) Paula interprets the picture for us as "a transfiguration of Richard's sensuality, Richard's' lechery". His sexuality calls to mind the awakening of her own: "Chaste Paula, cool Paula, bluestocking Paula, had found in her husband's deviously lecherous nature a garden of undreamt delights." (143) This thought suggests a connection between Paula's conception of her marriage with Richard and Bosch's painting, The Garden of Delights .

Despite the fact that Paula, unlike some of the characters in the novel, cannot happily engage in sexual relations outside of marriage, her feelings are nonetheless primarily sexual:

> Paula sat and looked at the picture. A slim elongated naked Venus turns languidly towards a slim elongated naked Cupid. Cupid stoops against her, his long-fingered left hand supporting her head, his long-fingered right hand curled about her left breast. His lips have just come to rest very lightly upon hers, or perhaps just beside hers. It is the long still moment of dreamy suspended passion before the spinning clutching descent. Against a background of smooth masks and desperate faces, the curly-headed Folly advances to deluge with rose petals the drugged and amorous pair, while the old lecher Time himself reaches out a long and powerful arm above the scene to bring all sweet things to an end. (143)

With a haste that foreshadows a successful completion to the viewing of the painting, she hurries from the gallery to the house she once shared with Richard. Gazing at the house, she simulates the scene from the painting, thereby divulging her need for Biranne: "Paula put her hand over her left breast, curling her fingers round it as Cupid had curled his fingers round the breast of his mother." (144) The scene ends in frustration, for she sees a woman enter the house. In order to parody this sequence, Murdoch juxtaposes Jessica's frenzied watch on Ducane's house. Like Paula, Jessica is shocked and intensely jealous when she sees a woman (Kate) enter at the front door.

Paula and Biranne are reconciled before Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time, the painting that drew them together in the past. Paula appropriately sees more in the painting during this scene, for out of deference to Richard, who "had appropriated the picture" (325), she recalls what she had read about it:

> The figures at the top of the picture are Time and Truth, who are drawing back a blue veil to reveal the ecstatic kiss which Cupid is giving to his mother. The wailing figure behind Cupid is Jealousy. Beyond the plump figure of the rose-bearing Pleasure, the sinister enamel-faced girl with the scaly tail represents Deceit. Paula noticed for the first time the strangeness of the girl's hand, and then saw that they were reversed, the right hand on the left arm, the left hand on the right arm. Truth stares, Time moves. But the butterfly kissing goes on, the lips just brushing, the long shining bodies juxtaposed with almost awkward tenderness, not quite embracing.(325)[12]

This description differs from the first in that it is more objective. She can recognize the other peripheral figures in the painting now that she has accepted that "this thing" with Richard is "so as it were physically important" (325). Not surprisingly, then, when Richard arrives their conversation is at first business-like, and he insists on discussing the situation metaphysically with his (a)'s and (b)'s. When Richard asks Paula for her opinion on whether or not he should give himself up and go to prison, she refuses to judge him, and looks to the picture for confirmation. Truth and Time have indeed brought them back together again. Her physical desire is as strong as ever; "She opened her eyes and looked into a blue-golden blur of Bronzino;" (328) but now the blue-golden blur of sexuality is not fooled by the "enamel-faced figure of Deceit", and Richard himself admits openly that he may in future be ". . . tempted by some piece of quick trouble-free pleasure." (329) Both Paula and the reader recognize from the events in The Nice and the Good that pleasure is never quite trouble-free, but Paula is nonetheless willing to accept Biranne for what he is. Although the scene is not, as mentioned previously, exactly transcendent, the love it portrays, however earthbound, is nevertheless powerful: "The Richardesque precision and even his intent at this moment of all moments to keep the door a little bit ajar for Venus, Cupid and Folly, touched [Paula] to an intensity of love for him which she could hardly control." (329)

A sequence in A Fairly Honourable Defeat, another novel which dates from the middle period of Murdoch's work, is closer to Paula and Biranne's courtship via art than Dora's epiphany before the Gainsborough. Murdoch's interest in the power of art to draw people together in a union of love and awareness is taken up again with the homosexual courtship of Simon and Axel. Our first indication that this type of courting took place is revealed by a photograph in their drawing-room which shows ". . . the tall slim long-nosed Greek kouros from the National Museum at Athens, the tutelary diety [sic] of their love."[13] It is significant that the pair own a photograph of the statue, and not a scaled-down marble replica of the archaic, fifth-century B.C. Apollo figure, for in a sense, the photograph reminds them more of the real statue that drew them together. The photograph is perhaps the closest thing to Plato's sense that art is duplication (enargeia). Thus Murdoch uses an image of duplication as a metaphor of vision in a purely physical sense, for one glance at the picture can remind both Simon and Axel of the actual statue that Simon fell in love with, hence of the origin of their love.

This courtship is based on sexuality, for Simon's love of the marble youth involves him in physical worship:

> . . . . He could not caress the face. But, coming back day after day, he caressed everything else. His fingers explored the bones of the long straight legs, the hollow of the thigh, the heavenly curve of the narrow buttocks, the flat stomach and the noble pattern of the rib cage, the pretty eye-shaped navel, the nipples of the breast, the runnel of the back, the shoulder blades. He lightly stroked the feet,

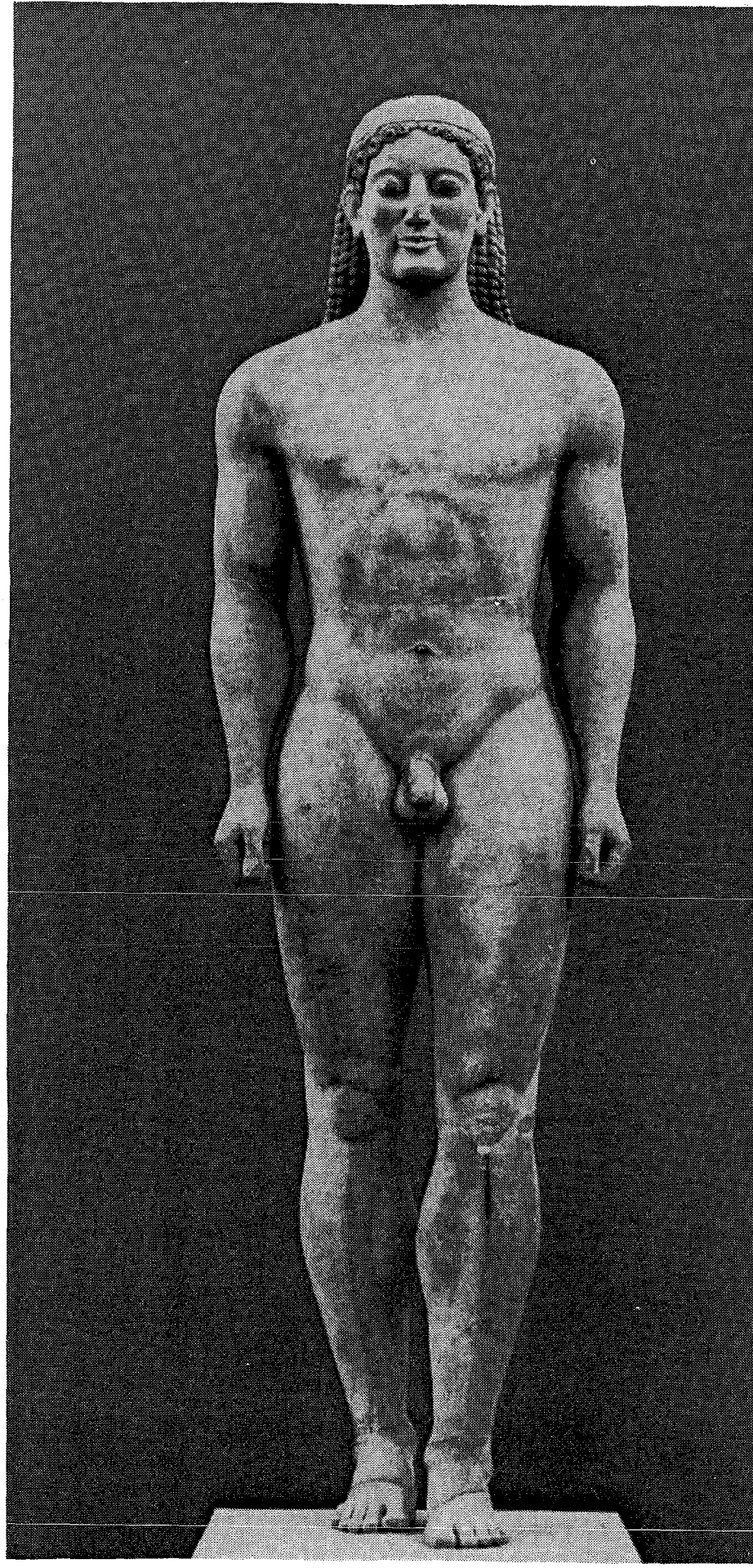

Fig. 3 Kroisos, Athens, National Museum

> probing between the long separated toes, he reverently touched the penis. He looked up into the serene divine countenance, huge-eyed, long-nosed, so enigmatically smiling. After a while fingers were not enough. He had to worship the statue with his lips, with his tongue. He kissed the buttocks, the thighs and hands, the penis, first hastily and then with slow adoration.[14]

One might be inclined to compare this passage with Brianne's final gesture before the painting, Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time: "He drew luxurious fingers across the canvas, caressing the faintly touching mouths of Venus and Cupid." (330) A link, however, also exists with Paula, for when she touches her breast outside Biranne's house she signals her need in the same way that Simon's form of worship signals need, and attracts Axel. Although Simon has unintentionally betrayed his relations with Axel by divulging the story of their courtship to Morgan, this homosexual partnership is the only one that remains intact at the end of the novel, for like Paula and Biranne who have lived through folly, pleasure and deceit, Simon and Axel know the worst about each other, but can still maintain a good relationship, and Axel is able to teach Simon the value of Plato's belief that "Nature educates us, art does not. This means: not statues, but boys."[15]

Axel, referring to the way they fell in love, assures Simon that "'It could never have happened in the British Museum, dear boy,'"[16] but some of Murdoch's other novels indicate that indeed it could have. Art galleries, from the middle novels on, are commonly used as romantic or erotic settings. We have al-

ready noted that Paula and Biranne, Simon and Axel conduct a courtship in the National Gallery of London and the National Museum of Athens respectively. Such scenes usually have a comic dimension, for the lovers are sometimes interrupted by "serious" gallery hunters: the erudite Americans who interrupt and beat a hasty retreat twice, as well as the boisterous school children in The Nice and the Good. The scene quoted from at length of Simon caressing the kouros is simultaneously erotic and humorous, for the demonstrative devotee of art must be cunning to avoid attendants. We recall the remonstrance Hugo, in An Unofficial Rose, receives for caressing a drawing he once owned. Although there is an obvious inward- as opposed to outward-looking love interest in the two examples provided above, Paula and Biranne, Simon and Axel may be redeemed, for their displays of love are balanced by genuine appreciation for the works of art before them. This appreciation signals the probable success of the relationship.

Other couples in the Murdoch canon are not as sensitive as Paula and Richard, Simon and Axel. As soon as Gracie and Ludwig from An Accidental Man announce their engagement, Gracie has them "scouring" London like tourists. Listed among their many activities is kissing in ". . . the National Gallery and the Courtauld Institute and the Victoria and Albert Museum."[17] A comment to Ludwig betrays Gracie's restlessness and lack of direct interest in art: "'Then we

take a train to Charing Cross and walk across Hungerford Bridge to the Hayword Gallery. There's that exhibit of what's-his-name we haven't seen yet.'"[18] The young people are not alone, however, for Matthew and Mavis plan to meet romantically at various galleries. Matthew writes to Mavis: "With Valmorana and the villa both impossible we are like babes in the wood, are we not my dear? I suggest National Gallery tomorrow, British Museum on Tuesday and Wallace Collection on Wednesday!"[19] This abuse of the art gallery provides one indication that these relationships are doomed to failure.

Perhaps the best example of a character who abuses the opportunity for transcendence the art gallery offers is Julius King in A Fairly Honourable Defeat. He is more culpable than other individuals who are merely harmless and egotistically blind, for he professes to see the human race clearly and rationally, but chooses to use his power of sight to dupe humanity, and thus rob others of an opportunity for transcendence. Michael Birdsall goes so far as to say that Julius is Murdoch's "artistic alter ego," that "Through the character of Julius King, Murdoch explores the temptations of artistic power, the abuses which are possible when one is able to create a false world and make that world seem convincing."[20] Julius is especially convincing at the Tate Gallery, where he meets Morgan accidentally. The episode is in some ways a parody of Simon and Axel's encounter in Athens: Morgan and Julius are ex-

lovers; they are at an exhibition of modern sculpture, which Morgan finds "interesting", but which Julius calls "pure and absolute junk". When Morgan suggests they sit by the Turners, he follows her, but harshly criticizes the paintings she attempts to comment on intellectually. Her statements are in a sense false, but however pretentious, they represent an attempt at looking beyond herself. Julius' response is as unforgivable as it is abrasive:

> 'Don't you care for Turner?'
> 'Not much. A hopelessly derivative painter. Always copying somebody. Poussin, Rembrandt, Claude. Never finishing a picture without ruining it. And he had far too high an opinion of himself. He should have remained a minor genre painter, that's about his level. I'm afraid his painting resembles his poetry.'
> 'I didn't know he wrote poetry.'
> 'He wrote pretentious doggerel.'[21]

To this pronouncement he adds; "That rubbish we saw in the other room is a clear enough announcement that the show is over. In a hundred years or so nobody will have heard of Titian or Tintoretto."[22]

These comments force Morgan away from the paintings themselves, and back into her latest egotistical theory of love. As the conversation between them continues along personal lines, she increasingly takes on Julius' perspective, as if to, in withdrawing herself from the art, draw herself nearer to him, until he finally counters her desperate appeals for love by telling her that personal relationships are unimportant:

> '. . . These things are not as important as you think, Morgan. They are flimsy and unreal. You want some sort of drama now, you want an ordeal of some kind, you don't want to suffer in a dull way, and

> you want me to help you. But these are merely superficial agitations. Human beings are roughly constructed entities full of indeterminacies and vaguenesses and empty spaces. Driven along by their own private needs they latch blindly onto each other, then pull away, then clutch again. Their little sadisms and their little masochisms are surface phenomena. Anyone will do to play the roles. They never really see each other at all. There is no relationship, dear Morgan, which cannot quite easily be broken and there is none the breaking of which is a matter of any genuine seriousness. Human beings are essentially finders of substitutes.'[23]

The interview ends with Julius promising to prove the above remarks by conducting a human experiment, and he decides to use Simon and Axel as a test case. Morgan's feeble attempt to stop him, "'It seems so unkind now its real people!'"[24] is successfully countered by Julius' charm: "'But no one would really suffer, that's my point. I'd do it in the most angelic manner.'"[25] We are prepared for Morgan's reaction, therefore, when she takes another look at the Turners, but does not really see them: "She could see now how limited and amateurish they really were."[26] Iris Murdoch has commented that, "Good is mysterious because of human frailty, because of the immense distance which is involved. . . ."[27] In this episode, Julius and Morgan have managed to increase rather than decrease that distance.

Having discussed some of the implications of works of art in The Nice and the Good and A Fairly Honourable Defeat, it seems appropriate to move from the landscape paintings of Turner back to the landscape of The Nice and the Good. Morgan's newly-acquired smugness with respect to Turner's art is similar

to Kate Gray's, and initially, to John Ducane's response to the natural environment at Trescombe House. Kate's appreciation of the colour of the sea has already been noted and compared with the "blue-golden blur" of Bronzino's painting. Michael Birdsall has commented on the way Ducane, in as selfish a manner as Kate, ". . . projects onto the landscape the neatness and orderliness which he imposes on his personal affairs."[27] The adventure in Gunnar's Cave, however, radically alters his perspective in a truly transcendent way, for when he is back in his home, he pays attention to the world outside of himself: "The evening sunlight made the little street glow with colour. Oh beautiful painted front doors, thought Ducane, beautiful shiny motor cars. Bless you, things." (312) He also feels that as a result of this ordeal, ". . . he would smell the sea now until the end of his days." (314)

The sequence in the cave complements the sequence before the Bronzino, in that the transcendent experience precedes the slightly less transcendent one, and to a certain extent orchestrates it. Ducane's realization that he is no man's judge, that "All power is sin and all law is frailty. Love is the only justice. Forgiveness, reconciliation, not law," (307) inspires him to help reconcile Paula with Biranne by refusing to judge Richard, and by encouraging him to try to see Paula again. Ironically, then, Octavian's exchange with Kate, which considers John in their image, is both true and false: "'John's a very nice chap, but he's not the wise good man that we once

thought he was.'/ 'We thought he was God, didn't we, and he turns out to be just like us after all.'/ 'Just like us after all.'" (343) Ducane's epiphany, and his report on the Radeechy incident (which Octavian feels is a bit thin) do reduce him to the level of ordinary humanity, but his newly-aquired awareness, and as a result, the omissions in his report, raise him above the level of mere mechanical humanity as symbolized in the figures of Kate and Octavian.

Others have considered the cave incident in The Nice and the Good as an adventure in the style of Spencer's Faerie Queene, and most critics accordingly focus on Pierce's growth from boyhood to manhood as a result of the experience. Few, however, devote much attention to Ducane's experience in the cave. Michael Birdsall suggests in passing that John, like Pierce, faces "personal devils". Betty Foley points to Ducane's "journey into the self," but she merely points without analysing. She also makes the rather surprising conclusion that Ducane's "subsequent soul-searching does not clarify his values."[29] One must take Mrs. Foley to task for such a flagrant dismissal of chronological time in The Nice and the Good, for the chapter that immediately follows the emergence of Pierce and Ducane from the water has Ducane discussing with Richard his decision not to implicate Biranne in the Radeechy report. After urging Richard to seek out his wife, Ducane reads several letters which define his position rather clearly with respect to the women who had been part of his life of deceit. Once he

recognizes that "It was self, fat self, that mattered in the end," (321) he picks up the cryptogram (whose meaning had previously eluded him) and solves the Radeechy puzzle, which itself reveals egotism. John concludes that, "Perhaps all egotism when it is completely exposed has a childish quality," (322) and he pities Radeechy. This thought is taken even further, however, for in a statement that must call to mind his epiphany, Ducane realizes that, "The great evil, the dreadful evil, that which made war and slavery and all man's inhumanity to man lay in the cool self-justifying ruthless selfishness of quite ordinary people, such as Biranne and himself." (323) At this point he sits down and writes a letter of resignation to Octavian. All this occurs within the space of the one chapter that immediately follows the cave adventure. This suggests to me a major change in Ducane's outlook, one that introduces humility into a once over-confident, self-satisfied individual.

More importantly for the purposes of this thesis, though, is Ducane's actual trial by water, for the rescue is described in visual language. Much of the action here is as symbolic as the figures in Bronzino's allegory. Ducane swims towards the cave, but the difficulty involved in even reaching the cave foreshadows the physical as well as spiritual pain in store for him within it. As he sets out after Pierce, he removes some clothing, as if to prepare himself for the stripping of layers from his ego. Once in Gunnar's Cave, Ducane can no longer actually see the world around him, thus he externalizes

the world within him, such that the darkness becomes ". . . a screen upon which the contents of his mind could be projected physically." (295) This represents an attempt to maintain "the schema of his body" (something he loses later at a particularly low point), in that his thoughts create the external world which enables him to see his way to Pierce. The images projected onto the screen of darkness urge him on. These images, then, become metaphors of vision individually and collectively in the sense that each tells Ducane something about himself, but all of them work towards the selfless act of trying to save another human being from death.

In the early stages of the search, the projections take the form of pictures from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. The pictures he evokes describe the progress of his journey. The image of Alice in the Pool of Tears is appropriate for a man who feels "very small and alone," (293) the idea of the looking glass turning into a "silvery gauze" parallels Ducane's increasing sense that he is "removed from reality," (294) and when he begins to despair, he sees Alice falling down the rabbit hole. Other images of Pierce, trapped and hurt, alternate with visions of Mary Clothier's face, for in moving towards Pierce, Ducane is also drawing closer to Mary. This is a dramatization of John's realization later in the novel,"It seemed now to Ducane that his thoughts had been, for a long time, turning to Mary, running to her instinctually like animals, like children." (335)

This is evident in the first allusion to Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,[30] for Ducane remembers ". . . the grace with which Alice swam, her dress so elegantly spread out in the water. Something about that picture must have affected him when he was a child. Girls and their dresses." (294) Shortly after thinking this John sees an image of Mary's face, and from this point forth, pictures of Alice recall Mary. The allusion to Alice, then, represents, on its most instinctual level, this movement towards Pierce's mother. The phrase "Girls and their dresses" came to John's mind on an earlier occasion when Mary tried to help him make a decision about Biranne's part in the Radeechy affair. He found himself holding the hem of her dress as she was giving him advice, and her dress called to mind particular dresses he had seen Kate and Judy wear (274). It is significant that the cave episode isolates Mary's face from those of the other women vying for his love.

At the end of the ordeal, after Ducane's epiphany, which is in great part owing to the last image that flashes before him, the vision of Biranne's face ". . . near to him, as in a silent film, moving, mouthing, but unheard," (307) he lies naked and supine in Mary's boat. John is simply a "thin white heavy form of a naked man," (311) who will need the help of a woman who ". . . assured him of the existence of a permanent moral background." (273) That he is in Mary's boat (Mary has out-distanced Kate literally and figuratively), and that he is naked before her in a spiritual as well as physical sense,

prefigures the eventual marriage of the pair. This scene is unlike the one before the Bronzino painting in that it is not primarily sexual. Mary sees an exhausted naked man, someone who has saved her son. It seems fitting that as Pierce's rescuer, Ducane is to become his step-father, and that as Mary's face guided him through the cave to safety, Mary should become his wife, for "He had begun to need Mary when he had begun to need a better image of himself. She was the consoling counterpart of his self-abasement." (336) Just as this trial by water brings John and Mary together, then, so Bronzino's painting brings Paula and Richard together. The former union is achieved through love of a selfless kind, while the latter is engineered out of kind intentions and a powerful physical love.

The Nice and the Good is a novel that is in great part structured around a work of art, Bronzino's Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time. The painting is described twice in the course of the novel, and on both occasions the interpretation offered matches accepted, conventional interpretations, thus the allegory of the painting presents in microcosm many of the patterns in the novel. The reconciliation before the Bronzino marks the first instance in Murdoch's work in which the art gallery is used for romantic or erotic purposes. This less than transcendent encounter is complemented by an epiphanic moment experienced on the verge of death. Although Ducane's journey into Gunnar's Cave begins with visions of works of art that

affirm humanity, the closing moments of the ordeal are characterized by the intense humility of a man literally and figuratively stripped of art and ego in the face of a greater force, the sea.

CHAPTER III

The Sacred and Profane Love Machine: Towards a Disappearing Artifact

The Sacred and Profane Love Machine is the one novel in Iris Murdoch's canon that borrows its title from another work of art, Titian's painting The Sacred and Profane Love.[1] Given the title, the reader becomes conscious from the outset of possible metaphorical implications of the painting in the context of Murdoch's story about an uncertified psychoanalyst, Blaise Gavender, who leads two separate lives, and has two separate families. Blaise has fathered two sons: David, by his wife Harriet, and Luca, by his mistress Emily McHugh. In his own words, "One simply divided one's mind in two and built impenetrable barriers between the parts."[2] The triangles formed between Blaise, his women, and children are mimicked in Love Machine[3] by other characters, such as Montague Small, Edgar Demarnay, Constance Pinn, and Kiky St. Loy, who form various love triangles of the sacred and profane kind. This type of patterning is reminiscent of the pairings and parodic symmetrical occurences in The Nice and the Good.

Love Machine centres on the conflict that arises when "the impenetrable barriers" break down and Blaise confesses the existence of his long-standing illegitimate family to his wife. Accordingly, the novel's setting shifts from the

relatively verdant pastoral garden at Hood House and the coveted orchard at Locketts (owned by Small, a prolific detective-story writer and friend of the Gavenders) to Putney and Emily and Luca's shabby apartment. The potential friction between the two families is intimated in several ways (Luca, for instance, has seen his father's official residence at the beginning of the novel, when he stands in the garden and is thought to be an apparition by David, Harriet and Monty), but the two households are nicely contrasted by the family pets: there are seven large dogs at Hood House, but only a pair of cats in Putney, none of which Blaise cares for. We learn early in Love Machine that as a child, Harriet "had had a morbid fear of cats, and used to search her bedroom carefully every night in case a cat had secreted itself there." (13)

The natural imagery in this novel is as self-contained as each character's inner life. Hood House has only a small garden, ". . . a square of lawn to bless itself with, and the long fat box hedge and the acacia tree and Harriet's herbaceous border and her few roses." (11) Monty's orchard is coveted by Blaise as he remembers that the whole garden as well as Small's house used to be owned by the occupant of Hood House. The orchard therefore ceases to be a thing of beauty for Blaise, and becomes instead a symbol of possession. Ironically, Monty spends more time indoors (Lockett's is "a gem of art nouveau") than in his orchard. Although the garden appears first as

natural imagery, as the novel progresses the reader becomes increasingly aware of the ordered rows of the orchard and the hedged-in square of lawn as adjuncts to art. Indeed, the Hood House portion of the garden gains a mythological dimension when Blaise tries to force himself into the house, but is attacked by his wife's hungry dogs.[4]

The water imagery in Love Machine is found only sparingly in the conscious world of the characters. Hood House is described as a "sort of seaside house", and Blaise must cross the Thames to reach Emily's apartment. David, under the guidance of Constance Pinn whose "motions of a diver" issue him into the interior of a rose hedge, is treated to a glimpse of the naked girls of the school Emily once taught at bathing in what David thinks is a marble basin, the size of a swimming pool. This scene, which marks a rite of passage for David, has mythological associations, for behind the basin is ". . . an immense and very battered baroque fountain representing Poseidon surrounded by sea nymphs." (236) The water imagery at a conscious level, then, is either simply descriptive, or, like the garden, is fashioned in a way that suggests art rather than nature.

Water imagery also exists at the unconscious level in Love Machine. Like Blaise's love for Harriet, which he describes as having been ". . . obscured and gone underground like a river," (84) water has been submerged in the dreams of the individuals in this novel. David's dreams provide the best example, for they are replete with images of fish struggling in

the sea, which develop from religious associations with Christ to sexual ones with mermaids. The last dream he has in Love Machine is orgasmic, and prefigures the terror he is shortly to experience at the sight of naked girls in a swimming pool. He dreams that he is in China, in ". . . a wild mountain landscape [with] a wooden cistern fed by a warm spring." A naked girl is bathing in "the thick creamy water," until suddenly, "with increasing speed a great roaring avalanche was beginning to descend. The sea of tumbling rocks engulfed the cistern and blotted out the path." (232)

If water is a metaphor for nature in the novels of Iris Murdoch, then one might expect it to be submerged here, for the dreams of David, Blaise, Monty, Emily, and even Harriet and Magnus Bowles, all of which in some way include associations with the natural world of animals and water, reveal more about their natural inclinations and perceptions than do some of their conscious acts. The dreams are in effect miniature allegories of waking existence. The natural face of dreams, however, is underpinned by an association with art. A conversation between David and Monty presents the two contrasting views of dreams as natural and stylized:

> 'Dreams are rather marvellous, aren't they,' David was saying. 'They can be beautiful in a special way like nothing else. Even awful things in dreams have style, not like real things which disgust one, like watching the dogs eat.'
>
> 'There is a fresh pure innocence about some dream images,' said Monty, 'only one mustn't interrogate them too much.'
>
> 'You mean like my father?'

> 'Just let them come, visit, like birds.'
> 'You don't believe in "the deep dream life from which all life emerges" as my father puts in his latest article?'
> 'No,' said Monty. 'A dream is a story you feel inclined to tell at breakfast time.'
> 'You can't mean that! Don't you think there are deep causes, machinery sort of, that it all means something?' (113-114)[5]

This conversation also presents the dilemma of a writer who includes dreams in his narrative, for the reader is accustomed to look for associations between any possible symbols, such as dreams, offered in the text. Iris Murdoch rewards such readers, for the dreams in this novel are not just visitations, like birds. Murdoch is aware of this process, however, for as I shall discuss in more detail later in this chapter, the word "machine" in the title of this book points up the mechanical processes of writing and reading as much as of loving.

Before considering how the art of Love Machine differs from that of the other novels discussed thus far, I would like to emphasize the many similarities that exist between this work and others by Murdoch. Although, in some respects, The Sacred and Profane Love Machine is almost as "experimental" as The Black Prince, in other respects it either does not differ substantially from the other less "experimental" novels, or it differs only in degree by improving upon old techniques. Like most of the earlier and indeed some of the later works, this one makes use of similes relating to painting and painters. David's attitude in sleep is described by Monty as ". . . . resembling Wallis' picture of the death of Chatterton." (225)

Apart from illuminating Monty's thought processes, namely his adoration of David, this type of observation provides the reader with a visual experience on a local scale. Perhaps A Severed Head was adapted for film precisely because of its many such short, visual similes, which serve to colour that text. Quick metaphorical references to, for example, the "Bellini green" background of Martin and Antonia's drawing-room also shade A Severed Head, and therefore make it more accessible visually.

Another visual focus in Love Machine achieves a more metaphoric level when Emily admonishes Blaise: "'You can't go through the looking glass without cutting yourself.'" (129) One might add that both the looking glass family and the legal one are also hurt as a result of Blaise's mirror world existence. As we have seen already, though, Emily's perception is untrue for Annette Cockeyne in The Flight from the Enchanter, but very true of Ducane in The Nice and the Good.[6] References to Alice in Murdoch's work usually involve the pictures in Carroll's fairytale, and thus serve doubly as metaphors of vision as these refer the reader to another work of art, but more specifically to the visual context of that work.

Harriet Gavender, a painter manqué, is the "gallery hunter" of this novel. She attends to works of art in the same way that Dora Greenfield does in The Bell. The paintings represent something totally outside of her that minimizes her ego:

> . . . Harriet had no impersonal abstract world,

> except perhaps the world of pictures, and that seemed to come to her as pure 'experience', not anything she could possibly talk about. What I feel with pictures is different she thought, it's like being let out into a huge space and not being myself any more. Whereas what I feel looking at Monty is so absolutely here and now and me, as if I were more absolutely my particular self than ever, as if I were just throbbing with selfhood. It's odd because I love the pictures and I love Monty, but it is so different. (53-54)

The huge space that Harriet feels she is let out into is comparable to Dora's sensation of passing between the paintings at the National Gallery ". . . as through a well-loved grove."[7] Dora's revelation that the pictures somehow reinstate something of interest and value in a world that "had seemed to be subjective,"[8] is Harriet's common experience. The Giorgione, like Bronzino's Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time in The Nice and the Good, functions allegorically, although on a much smaller scale. The allegory is related to Harriet alone, and primarily involves the central tree in Giorgione's picture, for Harriet's focus on the tree represents an attempt on the part of her unconscious to communicate to her conscious thoughts the link between a child, a dream, and the acacia in her backyard. This series of associations will be treated more fully later in a discussion of internal symbolism in Love Machine.

Although there are no erotic encounters at the art gallery in this novel, Harriet's spiritual experience at the National Gallery on "Magnus Bowles days" actually sets the erotic scenes between Blaise and Emily in relief, for Magnus

Bowles is the Bunbury of Love Machine. It is both comical and less than comical when Harriet turns her maternal attention to Magnus, Blaise's supposedly hermit patient, who is a frustrated painter (like Harriet) with interesting "painter's" dreams and suicidal inclinations. His set-backs and dreams become a metaphor for the double tension Blaise feels as a result of having to keep generating the lie of Magnus, while having to contend with conflicts in his neglected illegitimate household. Bowles (a fiction created by Monty to help Blaise) is the symbol for the attention Blaise gives to Emily and Luca.

The indirect allusion to "The Death of Acteon" already suggested is perhaps clearer than, for instance, the similarity pointed out earlier between the description of Annette Cockeyne's behaviour at the end of the first chapter of The Flight and the picture of Alice running with the Red Queen in Through the Looking Glass. Some comparisons are even more nebulous than this one. One might suggest, for example, a correspondence between Pierce and Ducane's progress through Gunnar's Cave and Breughel's painting, "The Blind leading the Blind", but this type of analogy is artificial and strictly subjective. A study of Henry and Cato, by contrast, can benefit from associations between Henry's progress through that novel and the pictures of Max Beckmann. Although Beckmann's paintings remain unnamed in Henry and Cato, Henry's own desire to write a book about Beckmann's art entitled Screaming or Yawning, and his determination to torture himself and his family to offset

boredom warrants most comparisons that can be drawn between Beckmann's art and Henry's actions. Similarly, the possible allusion to "The Death of Acteon" becomes more plausible given the importance of another painting by Titian in this novel.

I have stated, then, that Iris Murdoch makes use of similes, metaphors, and allegorical situations which relate to the arts, notably painting. The phrase "makes use of" should be qualified at this point. I am not trying to imply that Murdoch is subjugating painting to literature. As already noted in the introduction to this paper, no competition exists between the arts in this oeuvre. Murdoch is simply (or perhaps not so simply) evoking visual forms of art to broaden the visual experience of the reader of her novel. If there were a form of competition between her novels and painting, surely the writer would seek her own forms of description in order to outdo the painter. Even the verbal descriptions of paintings that do occur in these novels do not attempt to outdo or to improve upon the painting. The picture is there to add to the text, not to be consumed and transformed by it. Although some characters in the novels attempt to see paintings in their own image, Murdoch does not "use" works of art in this way.[9]

Clearly, in order to continue this discussion, a distinction will have to be made between metaphors of vision intended for the characters in the novel, and by extension for the reader, and metaphors of vision intended for the reader alone.

This kind of discussion necessarily involves distinguishing between what Murdoch calls internal and external symbols. The presence of both types of symbol (as they relate to painting) separates The Sacred and Profane Love Machine from other novels in the Murdoch canon. The remainder of this chapter, then, will examine the departures that Love Machine offers from the other novels by detailing the effects of internal and external symbolism on the reader.

By Iris Murdoch's own definition, internal symbols are invented by the characters and external symbols are invented by the author. Murdoch is extremely aware of the symbolism in her novels, and, judging from the following remark made in an interview with Jack Biles, seems to feel that internal symbols are metaphors of vision in a psychological sense:

> . . . I think the symbols must be very carefully controlled and, very often, the symbolism in a novel is invented by the characters themselves, as happens in real life. We're all constantly inventing symbolic images to express our situations.[16]

Many critics have been quick to point out the gap that exists between what Murdoch attempts to achieve in fiction and the actual achievement. I am in agreement with the critics in this respect, for symbols based on works of art in the novels of Iris Murdoch tend to be external rather than internal; that is, they are included in the novels as metaphors of vision to enhance the realism of the work from the perspective of the reader. Most of the examples included in the summary of allusions common to the Murdoch canon occur primarily for the benefit of

the reader, with the possible exception of Bronzino's Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time, which comes closer to internal symbolism than any of the works of art depicted in the novels prior to the publication of The Nice and the Good.

Although the most important metaphor of vision related to painting, Titian's The Sacred and Profane Love, is an external symbol for the patterning in this novel, Love Machine provides perhaps the first example of an internal symbol based on the visual associations of a work of art. When Harriet learns of her husband's second family, she correlates her feelings of despair over her ruined household with ". . . an Annunciation by Tintoretto in which the Virgin sits in a wrecked skeleton stable into which the Holy Ghost has entered as a tempestuous destructive force." (144) The reader ought not to accuse Murdoch of planting the allusion to this religious painting in Harriet's mind (although it does foreshadow later events), for Harriet's imagination is visual: she is a would-be painter who appreciates a day at the art gallery; moreover, Tintoretto's image of destruction represents on a fully conscious level what Harriet has already sensed on an unconscious one via the association between a vision of Luca by the acacia and her troubling dream about the terrifying face of a child, as well as the special attention she pays to the tree in Giorgione's picture.

When Luca sees his father's other home, he somehow sets the machinery in motion that will make Blaise's two fam-

ilies come into contact. Harriet is disturbed by the appearance of a child in her garden, "merged almost into the dark trunk of the acacia tree," (10) for she recalls the dream she had had the night before:

> . . . She had dreamt that she was in her bedroom, in her bed (only Blaise was not with her), and that she had awakened in the darkness to see a strange light shining at the window. This is no dream, she said to herself as she rose in fright and went to look out. Just outside in the branches of a tree was the source of light, a radiant child's face, the face only, suspended there and looking at her. She ran back at once and burrowed under her bedclothes, thinking in great terror: suppose that face were to come and look at me through the window? (10)

The dream within a dream aside, Harriet's unconscious is obviously pointing to an inconclusive feeling within her that something is amiss. Her terror at the sight of a child's face is unnatural, considering her starving maternal desire for David. That she is alone in bed, without Blaise, suggests that Harriet, at an unconscious level, is aware and suspicious of her husband's absences.[11] This dream alone, however, is not enough for the reader or for Harriet to link Blaise's absence with the radiant face of the child, for the dream represents only one component in the symbolism.

Another component that marks the inevitable destructiveness of the annunciation in Harriet's life is found in a dream that Blaise has:

> . . . He was standing in the garden beside the acacia tree when he saw that part of the trunk appeared to be moving. A huge snake was gradually descending the tree towards him. He watched with horror and a kind of joy the approach of the snake.

> Only it was not exactly a snake, since it had a pair of large wings folded upon its back, in the way in which a beetle's wings are folded. As it came nearer to him it reared its head and the wings spread out and began to buffet him on either side, half suffocating him in their strong soft violence. Meanwhile the creature's large tail, tapering to a point finer than a pencil, had wound itself round one of his legs. He was a woman in the dream. (19)

The snake with beetle's wings represents Luca (we learn later that he loves insects and that he wants a pet snake), whose presence by the acacia[12] eventually necessitates Blaise's confession. That Blaise is a woman in the dream suggests an association with Harriet, who will feel both joy and horror over Luca. Harriet's subsequent concentrated gaze upon the isolated tree in Giorgione's picture is indeed prophetic, for it suggests a third component, one that marks the shift of disturbances from unconscious levels to conscious ones. Whereas her dream and vision of Luca remain submerged, Harriet asks herself at the National Gallery, "Why suddenly this emotion, on this occasion, for this picture?" (53) Tintoretto's painting, then, is a natural metaphor of vision for Harriet, one that has evolved out of other visual experiences at unconscious as well as conscious levels.

Dreams and their associations with the conscious and other unconscious worlds entice the reader of Love Machine into becoming a self-styled psychoanalyst like Blaise Gavender. This search for internal symbolism, David's sense that there is a type of machinery or meaning to dreams and life, is parodied, perhaps for the first time in Murdoch's novels, when the author

includes an allusion to a character from another work in her own fiction. Septimus Leech, one of Blaise's patients, was the invisible friend of Julian Baffin in The Black Prince, who gave her the fateful tickets to a performance of Der Rosenkavalier.[13] Septimus' presence in Love Machine symbolizes a continuity in Murdoch's fictional world, hence the sense of an "internal" symbol. This type of gamesmanship is primarily intended for the benefit of the author and the reader,[14] and is perhaps a carry over from The Black Prince, the novel that immediately precedes Love Machine. The Black Prince, Murdoch's "experimental" novel, is written in the first person, and thus offers an easier way, as it were, to generate internal symbols. Although no one can deny that Murdoch wrote the book, her presence is obscured by Bradley's first person narrative, as well as the other narratives in the form of editor's comments and postscripts. The symbolism associated with, say, Hamlet therefore is internal as it may be attributed to Bradley, not simply to Iris Murdoch.

These internal symbols relating to works of art, as mentioned already, are not as widespread as external ones. Love Machine provides the clearest example of a major external symbol associated with art in Titian's painting, The Sacred and Profane Love. This painting is literally external, for it lies outside the text and exists solely for the author and the reader. The picture is never observed or discussed by a character in Love Machine. Only two statements in the novel use language that even

suggests the painting, but these do not establish any knowledge of the picture on behalf of the two individuals involved. Emily compares her position with Harriet's, and complains to Blaise: "'Oh I'm the flesh, and she's the spirit.'" (94) Much later Blaise muses: "Nor could he clarify in memory that transformation of his early affections which had made him feel that Harriet was his sacred love and Emily his profane." (342) Blaise, who does not enjoy pictures, would hardly think of Titian's painting to describe his feelings. The language, therefore, is definitely Murdoch's.

The result of writing a book whose ruling metaphor is placed outside the text is a variety of interpretations of the book. As there is no interpretation of Titian's painting within the text, critics have felt free to base an explication of the novel on the writings of art historians of their choice. Gail Elizabeth Aiken refers to Edith Abbot's book, The Great Painters, in her discussion of Love Machine, and Betty Foley uses William Fleming's Arts and Ideas. Neither, however, suggests reasons for the choice of art historian. This kind of freedom is not possible in a work such as The Black Prince, for Bradley himself provides a reading of Hamlet which must be used to analyse the symbolism relating to Shakespeare's play. Bradley, for instance, attempts to imitate Shakespeare's achievement in Hamlet in his own narrative. The greatness of Shakespeare as perceived by Pearson is the raison d'être of The Black Prince:

> . . . Shakespeare is passionately exposing himself

> to the ground and author of his being. He is speaking as few artists can speak, in the first person and yet at the pinnacle of artifice. How veiled that deity, how dangerous to approach, how almost impossible with impunity to address, Shakespeare knew better than any man. Hamlet is a wild act of audacity, a self-purging, a complete self-castigation in the presence of the god. Is Shakespeare a masochist? Of course. He is the king of masochism, his wriiting thrills with that secret.[15]

What is intriguing about Love Machine is that one must turn to specialized art-historical knowledge in order to appreciate some subtler parallels between Titian's painting and Murdoch's novel. This was unnecessary when considering the function of Bronzino's Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time in The Nice and the Good. Although I, too, am more or less choosing at random an interpretation of The Sacred and Profane Love from which to work in Edgar Wind's Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance, it is probable that Iris Murdoch was aware of this book when she wrote Love Machine. Both Wind and Murdoch are associated with Oxford, and Wind's book, first published in 1958, contains a chapter on Sacred and Profane Love. Considering Murdoch's interest in Plato, Pagan Mysteries would naturally be appealing. Furthermore, the argument in Wind's chapter on Sacred and Profane Love lends itself to what actually happens in Murdoch's novel.

Wind convincingly debunks traditional Christian interpretations of Titian's painting as representing sacred and profane love. He feels that the picture would have been more properly entitled "Amor Celeste e Umano,"[16] for the two women are part of one process which involves moving from left to right

in the painting, from Pulchritude via Amor to Voluptas. The same process occurs in Love Machine, for Blaise, once happy with Harriet's love, seeks a greater love in Emily's embraces. Note that the nude figure in Titian's painting, whom I am associating with Emily, is elevated from the clothed figure. Blaise recalls that he and Emily "lived like gods together." (73) Later he defines his love for Harriet and his love for Emily in language that suggests the difference between human love and celestial love:

> A philosopher said that the spiritualization of sensuality is called love. Blaise had certainly felt his early love for Emily to be all sense, all spirit. The absolute interpenetration of the two gave him, together with experiences of pleasure which he never previously knew existed, a sort of certainty about the whole thing which seemed to create its won truth and its own morality. In the light of this truth his relations with Harriet seemed hopelessly insincere, not only in this situation now, but fundamentally and always. . . He had loved Harriet. But he had married her in a muddled compromising impure deliberately blinded state, thinking this to be the best possible. He had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. . . by wilfully excluding the possibility of perfection. (79)

The closed vessel sitting by the clothed figure in Titian's painting comes to mind as representative of, in this context, Blaise's blindness in marrying Harriet.

The two figures are connected in The Sacred and Profane Love by Amor, and the rose that lies between them. The clothed woman appears to be listening to the unclothed one. I have already pointed out that Luca, the mediator between Harriet and Emily, plays the traditional role of Amor as "converting power", and thereby joins the two women in Love Machine. Murdoch's novel,

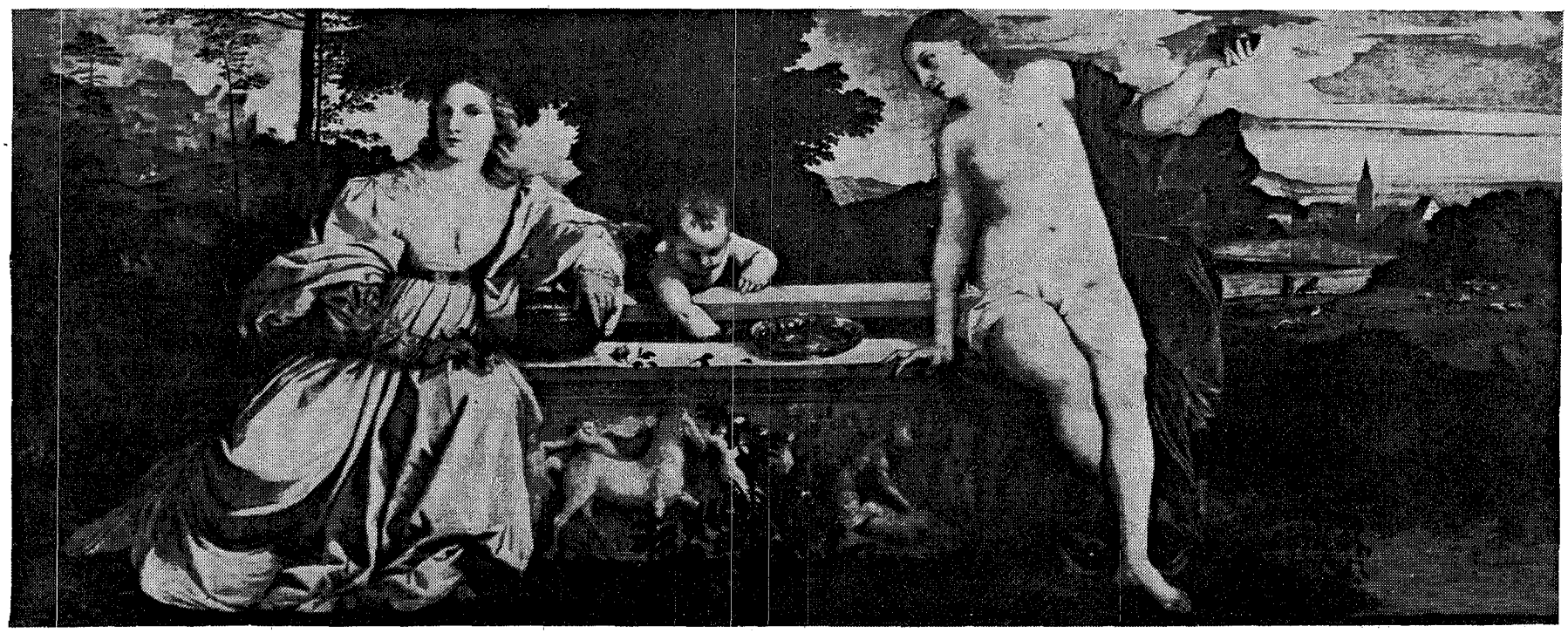

Fig. 4 Titian, Sacred and Profane Love, Rome, Borghese Gallery

like Titian's painting, shows the process of "initiation of Beauty into Love,"[17] for Blaise cannot indefinitely remain a ". . . man of two truths." (80) Once he discovers that Luca has invaded the garden at Hood House, Blaise confides in Monty: "'. . . It's the two worlds, suddenly one sees -- they're really -- one world after all.'" (126) The two women, then, cannot remain separate, for they are in effect twins, and indeed, like the figures in the painting, Harriet and Emily share almost the same hair-colouring. When they meet for the first time in Emily's apartment in Putney, Emily feels a communion with Blaise's wife, for she wants to "rescue" Harriet. At the end of the interview, Harriet's tears invite Emily's to gush out in pain as well.

The nude in Titian's painting, however, is elevated from the clothed figure, as Wind points out, which suggests the movement or process that Pagan Mysteries describes. Likewise, Blaise cannot continue loving both women at the same time, hence the prolonged oscillation between Harriet and Emily after the existence of his second family is disclosed to Harriet. Emily has the advantage over Harriet, for she has known about her for nine years. Although "Mrs. Placid" (whose nickname suggests the complacent expression of the clothed figure in The Sacred and Profane Love) is the taller of the two, Emily is elevated by her refusal to play Harriet's game, which would subjugate her in a paternalistic fashion to the family at Hood House. It is no wonder, then, that Harriet dies at the end of

Love Machine, leaving Emily alone with Blaise. The sense of elevation is undermined in Murdoch's novel, however, for Emily steps into Harriet's shoes by presiding over Hood House and by keeping Harriet's favourite bracelet (note the bracelet-like trim on the clothed figure's glove in Sacred and Profane Love). The machine of marriage may eventually delude Blaise into finding yet another "Amor Celeste," as indeed his drive with Kiky St. Loy confirms.

This brief look at some parallels between Wind's interpretation of Sacred and Profane Love and Love Machine suggests that the title of Murdoch's novel is contradictory, for the idea of sacred and profane love is not presented in pejorative, Christian terms in the text. Granted, Blaise commits adultery, which might be considered profane along with the "things he does" in bed with Emily (these are mirrored in the painting by the symbols of human lust and ammal passions on the fountain), but there is something special and sacred about this love. Harriet has a penchant for religious paintings, but she is not herself religious, thus the terms sacred or profane do not really apply to her at all. I would like to turn, then, to the implications of placing the novel's supposedly central metaphor outside the text, in the title only. A focus on the addition of the word "machine" in the title is crucial to an understanding of the metaphorical elements at play in Murdoch's novel.

The presence of the title of Titian's painting in the

title of Murdoch's novel implies a certain amount of equality between the two arts of painting and writing, for the picture, in a sense, is asked to preside over the text. Had Iris Murdoch not added the word "machine" to her title, the painting might indeed have subverted the text, for even as it stands now, critics spend a lot of time examining the painting before considering the novel. The word "machine", then, attempts to maintain a balance between the two arts. It also sets up a series of possibilities for interpreting the text. As Gail Elizabeth Aiken has thoroughly explored the permutations of "Sacred Love Machine," "Profane Love Machine," and "Sacred and Profane Love Machine" in the story of Blaise, Harriet and Emily, I shall not repeat such a study here. I would like, instead, to focus on the implications of "Sacred and Profane Love Machine" for the writer and the reader of Love Machine.

This type of focus is not intended to undermine the "seriousness"[18] of Murdoch's wordplay, for the word "machine", as Aiken has traced in her dissertation "This Accidental World," is a very serious one indeed. In this paper I have pointed to a number of mechanical characters in the Murdoch canon who may be comical, but who ultimately display serious failings. Examples of the Lusiewicz brothers mechanically recreating a punishing love with Rosa from fairytale days in Poland, and Hunter developing an incriminating photograph of his sister in The Flight are perhaps more overtly serious than the portrayal of Kate and Octavian 's mechanical "foreplay" in The Nice

and the Good. The word "tinification", coined by Isabel in The Italian Girl, provides a good description of the type of narrowed vision (tinification involves looking through the wrong end of binoculars) displayed by mechanical characters.

"Machine", then, is a significant word in the Murdoch canon. Set in the title of this novel, it prepares the reader for mechanical behaviour and mechanical situations in the text. Harriet's compulsion to bring dogs home is a psychological mechanism, Monty creates "Bowlesisms" as automatically as he produces Milo Fane stories. Indeed, the word itself appears at regular intervals in the novel: Emily "mechanically flirted with Blaise" (71) on their first meeting; Monty ponders the existence of ". . . a huge machine on which one could gear oneself in a second," (123) and he is obsessed with his dead wife's voice which he perversely plays back on a recording machine;[19] Blaise and Emily often fall back on "machine talk" in their arguments; and Edgar describes the mind to David as " an old rubbish heap," where "all sorts of little bits of machinery start up." (352)

It is not inconceivable, considering the "experimentalism" and gamesmanship displayed in The Black Prince, that the title of this novel reflects on the reader as much as on the content of the book itself, for "The Sacred and Profane Love Machine" may also be interpreted as the critic's need to find patterns in a work of art, which is somewhat akin to the artist's compulsion to order existence. Paintings are often given a title

by someone other than the painter himself. Such is the case for Titian's painting, which was labelled The Sacred and Profane Love in 1700. Ironically, this title, according to Edgar Wind, ". . . has engendered futile and self-contradictory attempts to affix a sacred and profane character to one or the other of the two figures."[20] An artificial title for the painting, then, has generated artificial interpretations. Perhaps Murdoch is parodying this process by making the reader aware, in the title of the work, that he is about to participate in similar sport by inevitably trying to discover "sacred" and "profane" elements in the text. David's insistance that dreams are mechanical, that they have meaning, is the reader's automatic trust, given the title, that sacred and profane mechanisms occur in this novel. The machine for the writer as well as for the reader is represented in the presence of those elements in the text.

That the discussion seems to be detaching itself from a study of particular characters or situations in Love Machine is the result of the presence of Titian's painting in the title. The movement outward of painting from text to title can serve as a metaphor for the role of art in the later novels of Iris Murdoch. Important metaphors of vision in the form of a work of art in these later texts are overpowered by metaphors of vision associated with nature.[21] The position of the painting outside the text, therefore, represents a step towards "the disappearing artifact," where the artifact is a painting or another work of art. Although

these do not ever actually disappear from the novels, the symbolism associated with them in the later books shrinks to a local level. Natural imagery, often associated with water, gains in importance. This ascendancy of natural imagery over artistic imagery in the later novels marks a reversal from Love Machine, in which water imagery has been submerged "like an underground river" in a type of calm before the storm.

CONCLUSION

Iris Murdoch writes in The Sovereignty of Good: "Beauty is the convenient and traditional name of something which art and nature share, and which gives a fairly clear sense of the idea of quality of experience and change of consciousness."[1] Indeed, art and nature literally combine throughout Murdoch's work in this fashion. The landscape of The Unicorn in itself evokes another work of art; the Tintoretto in An Unofficial Rose pictures a naked girl bathing in a pool of water; the cascade in The Italian Girl is considered to be a work of art, and its image is both painted and engraved. Dorina paints seascapes in An Accidental Man, and Tim Reede, whose name suggests nature, alternates between drawing animals and rocks, and mounting collages of autumn leaves. It seems fitting that art and nature share aspects of beauty, especially when combined in works of art within the fiction, for in this way, Murdoch does not merely say that art imitates nature, she shows us.[2]

Art and nature diverge, however, when potentially harmful forces of nature intervene to alter the consciousness of an individual. In extreme cases such as Charles Arrowby's in The Sea, the Sea, though, there is no immediate change in attitude either after the ordeal in Minn's Cauldron or after Titus's death by drowning, for Charles maintains a frenzied level of egotism despite the greater lessons nature tries to

teach him. For Charles, ". . . the sea . . . is not a place of rest, peace and knowledge,"[3] and it resists all of his attempts to control it. By contrast, Tim Reede in Nuns and Soldiers is immediately set on the right course once he has "passed the exam," as it were, by sweeping through the tunnel of an underground river in an effort to save a dog. Tim is a mediocre painter who lives in a moral "swamp", but who does his best work by a sacred pool that reflects a cliff. This point is perhaps best made in The Nice and the Good, however, for Ducane's attention to art is not great enough to prevent him from judging others. Only an escape from death in Gunnar's Cave can allow him to see his failings. A potentially destructive force of nature, then, can guarantee a response that might not be elicited from a work of art, for ". . . a great deal of art, perhaps most art, actually is self-consoling fantasy, and even great art cannot guarantee the quality of its consumer's consciousness."[4] Scenes such as the ones described, therefore, represent Murdoch's attempt to show that "Nature is very much larger than Art," and that nature is having "the last word."

The paradox that Henry Marshalson in Henry and Cato detects in a work of art that depicts scenes of pain and horror in a beautiful way, gives rise to the necessary qualifier that the nature evoked in any novel is still art, hence the apparent beauty of Effingham's insight on the verge of death in the bog of The Unicorn, of Ducane's terrifying visions in

the cave, and of Charles Arrowby's fall into a vortex of swirling water, These supposedly random, natural scenes are difficult to describe in a way that does not suggest art, hence the challenge that any artist faces of relating, ". . . the random detail of the world . . . with a sense of unity and form."[5] The moments of heightened awareness resulting from a clash with nature, then, involve a transformation, an energeic process. Murdoch tries to retreat from this position by suggesting that ". . . we are bestowing meaning upon Nature which we then rediscover in Nature, perhaps with surprise."[6] One must therefore evaluate the degree to which nature imitates art. Whereas the landscape of The Unicorn is allegorical, that of The Sea, the Sea is indifferent to Charles, a retired Prospero figure. The open form of the later novel itself imitates the perpetual motion of the sea, and is even more powerful than allusions to The Tempest, which suggests an attempt at faithfulness to nature. But this sense of transformation may also be applied to the way Iris Murdoch includes other works of art in her novels. Although she tries to depict reality in an enargeic sense when describing existing works of art, these cannot help but be transformed in fiction. In The Nice and the Good, the enargeic description of Cupid, Venus, Folly and Time evolves as important symbolism for the book as a whole, and in The Sacred and Profane Love Machine, the energeic process is immediately apparent in the title. These examples, though, differ from those associated with nature, in that the use of an-

other work of art to create a work of art, the use of form within form, is self-reflexive.

A fellowship of arts is created in Murdoch's novels when the works are considered self-reflexive, for in both an overt and covert manner,[7] the paintings comment on the process involved in writing fiction. In Love Machine, for instance, there is less emphasis on verisimilitude, and more emphasis on using techniques of writing to achieve in the novels what Titian achieves in his painting. Another example of covert self-reflexiveness is found in A Fairly Honourable Defeat. Julius King states that he is "allergic to reproductions,"[8] which calls to mind the type of enargeia Murdoch tries to avoid: the mechanical sense of duplication and "dull photography" discussed in The Flight from the Enchanter. Julius' distinction between painting and music reflects on some of the experiences associated with the respective arts in the oeuvre, as well as on Murdoch's possible motivation for including a sugnificant number of allusions to the visual arts:

> Painting may not be the greatest of arts, he reflected, but perhaps it gives the purest and most intense pleasure. At least it does me. I love music, but my pleasure in music remains always a little muddied by emotion. My pleasure in painting, is, as pleasure should be, absolutely cold.[9]

The following example of overt self-reflexiveness points to the nature of art in general, as well as to the art of Iris Murdoch: "The clear glowing light made the littered scene seem over-precise, purposive, as if one had wandered suddenly into the very middle of a work of art."[10] This type of

self-consciousness alerts the reader to painting rather than literature, and thus serves as a metaphor of vision in a literal as well as figurative sense.

The Philosopher's Pupil, Murdoch's latest novel to date, takes the self-reflexiveness of The Sea, the Sea (a novel in which Charles, the first person narrator, cannot decide if he is writing memoirs, a diary, or an autobiography) one step further by displaying a concentrated effort against any one form, and, one feels, against form itself, which is symbolized in the tension between the art of the Ennistone spa and the natural spring it taps. This novel resists overt self-reflexiveness in Charles Arrowby's sense of the word until the final page, when the narrator, "N",[11] leaves the reader with these words:

> The end of any tale is arbitrarily determined. As I now end this one, somebody may say: but how on earth do you know all these things about all these people? Well, where does one person end and another person begin? It is my role in life to listen to stories. I also had the assistance of a certain lady.[12]

Not only is "N" commenting upon his methods and techniques, but also for the first time Iris Murdoch herself enters the novels. Covert forms of self-consciousness, however, occur throughout the text, and these, like the quotation above, refer to the act of writing a novel as much as to the story at hand. Like a good town biographer, "N" tries to prove the validity of his assertions by naming his sources and by providing documentary evidence in the form of letters. Although the numerous details and asides that fill the text make it seem as

if he is not shaping the material, "N" often only gives one interpretation, his own, of an incident.

Whereas form in earlier novels by Murdoch could be supplied instantly by allusions to works of art, formlessness in The Philosopher's Pupil is emphasized by the tension between, as mentioned above, art and nature, where nature refuses to be subdued. Indeed, George McCaffrey's symbolic act of smashing the Museum's precious collection of Roman Glass suggests that art is crushed in this novel,[13] In one frenzied moment George is able to obliterate fragile ornaments that date back to antiquity. Nature, on the other hand, is not destroyed so easily. Nor is the hot spring easily controlled, for the only ". . . natural manifestation of the great spring which is visible to the public" (18), known as "Lud's Rill" or "Little Teaser", does not remain so small and docile.

The conflict between art and nature is felt within the spa's architecture itself, which has not been able to maintain one particular style for more than an era. "N" thoroughly details the history of the buildings, which date back to Roman times, but which have suffered many changes. Only the pump room remains from the eighteenth century. The main building is Victorian with Gothic ornament, and the Ennistone Hall is ". . . built of the local stone . . . full of fossils, but unfortunately rather soft." (19) The complex has a Botanical Garden, a lake, a Victorian Temple (which houses the Museum), an art gallery, and another garden which holds the plain

basin called "Little Teaser". The Bauhaus style Ennistone Rooms have suffered the greatest change as a result of steaming from the spring. The art déco interior, "the famous orange and white 'sunrise crockery'" and the zigzag mirrors, iredescent glass, and the "tubular snakes" have all needed replacement, as if to suggest that the more ornate the interior, the worse the damage. During the war, only the outdoor baths (they are more natural) survived intact. The spa is the town's social gathering place, but the inhabitants of Ennistone find the atmosphere confusing, for they cannot decide whether it is a hotel or a hospital.

Even the therapeutic nature of the springs has been questioned, and one gets the impression that the architecture and ornamentation have somehow poisoned the water. Even the outdoor gardens are stylized. The fluctuating heat levels of the water have also caused much concern, and several times in the course of the narrative "N" notes the temperature as if to reassure the reader that the spa is healthy. The doubts concerning the baths are confirmed when John Robert Rosanov, the famous philosopher, decides to commit suicide here. Ironically, George thinks he is murdering an already dead John Robert by pushing the body of his former teacher into a scalding tub, while Tom McCaffrey, George's half-brother, is trying to save himself from exploding pipes in "The Baptistry", the mechanical portion of the spring.

If Iris Murdoch decided to embody the artifice, obsessions and trickery of Charles Arrowby in architecture in this

novel, the spa as art takes us back to her address, "L'art est l'imitation de la nature." The Institute, like art which fills the void left by religion, is "what going to church used to be, only it happens every day." (23) John Robert's puritanism, mirrored in some occasional complaints about the spa as a "Temple of Hedonism", parallels the periodic Platonic puritanism that creeps into our literature and criticism at regular intervals. The sexual thrill that some women feel at the sound of water, and its aphrodesiac qualitites represent obsessional erotic experiences of art, such as Charles Arrowby feels when he sees a picture of a woman. The spa, then, becomes an ideal metaphor of vision for the "impotent voyeur", the narrator, who attempts to set down " . . . the misunderstandings which can exist between people who look into each other's eyes." (569)

Although The Philosopher's Pupil seems to be stressing the power of nature over art in concrete, visual terms, this has always been the case in the novels on a metaphorical scale, for art imitates human nature as well as environmental conditions. The progress in the novels of Iris Murdoch, therefore, has been from a lack of good art in The Flight, to good art that reflects human behaviour and responses in the middle novels, to the virtual disappearance of good art in the late novels in favour of a threatening natural world, which was present in the earlier work, but which was not as powerful.

This paper has focused primarily on the middle period,

for the idea of a fellowship of arts is concentrated effectively in those novels. The Nice and the Good, The Black Prince, The Sacred and Profane Love Machine, and Henry and Cato all reflect the harmony that can be achieved between art and nature, painting and the novel. The best way to restore a confidence in language, to my mind, is the path Iris Murdoch has taken by aspiring to a Jamesian sense of the sister arts in which visual and metaphoric modes of expression help and sustain each other.

NOTES

Preface

[1]Wendy Steiner, The Colors of Rhetoric (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 10-11.

[2]These are summarized in Norman K. Farmer, Jr.'s Poets and the Visual Arts in Renaissance England (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984).

[3]Michael Birdsall, "Art, Beauty and Morality in the Novels of Iris Murdoch," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1980, p. 104.

Introduction

[1]Iris Murdoch, The Fire and the Sun (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.7

[2]Henry James, "The Art of Fiction," The Portable Henry James, ed. Morton Dauwen Zabel (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1951), p. 389.

[3]See The Sister Arts (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 59-70.

[4]Rencontres avec Iris Murdoch (Caen: Université de Caen, 1978), p.91.

[5]Iris Murdoch, "L'art est l'imitation de la nature," Rencontres avec Iris Murdoch, p. 10.

[6]Murdoch, "L'art est l'imitation de la nature," p. 17.

[7]James, "The Art of Fiction," p.395.

[8]Ibid. Bledyard, a character from The Sandcastle, comments that painting is the most natural art, for we can

paint before we can speak. The art of painting, however, is forgotten when we lose our innocence.

[9]Iris Murdoch, "Against Dryness," Encounter xvi (1961), p. 20.

[10]Iris Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good (New York: Schocken Books, 1970), p. 98.

[11]Murdoch, "L'art est l'imitation de la nature," p. 12.

[12]Robert Scholes, The Fabulators(New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p.12.

[13]Murdoch, "L'art est l'imitation de la nature," p.10.

[14]Elizabeth Dipple feels that although Murdoch is the subtler artist, a comparison could be drawn between her novels and the "technical filmic habits" of Ingmar Bergman. See Elizabeth Dipple, Iris Murdoch:Work for the Spirit (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1982), p.87.

[15]Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, p. 77. Seven years later she states: "Plato is right to exclaim. . .that sight (vision) is our greatest blessing, without which we would not reach philosophy. Our ability to use visual structures to understand non-visual structures (as well as other different visual ones) is fundamental to explanation in any field." The Fire and the Sun, p.68. This too is reminiscent of Julian Jayne's observation that ". . . the most prominent group of words used to describe mental events are visual." The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), p.55.

[16]Frank Baldanza, Iris Murdoch (New York: Twayne Publishers Inc., 1974), p. 26.

[17]Iris Murdoch, Under the Net (Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1979), p.186.

[18]Jany Watrin, "Iris Murdoch's A Fairly Honourable Defeat," Revue des Langues Vivantes, 38 (1972), pp. 62-63.

[19]Rencontres avec Iris Murdoch, p.86.

[20]Iris Murdoch, The Unicorn (Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1963), p.167.

Chapter One

[1]Iris Murdoch, The Flight from the Enchanter (Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1976), p.179. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[2]Baldanza, Iris Murdoch, p.55.

[3]Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, p.84.

[4]Murdoch, Under the Net, p.239.

[5]Murdoch, "Against Dryness," p.18.

[6]The name, Ringenhall, implies Dante's rings of hell, for Annette flees from a lecture on Inferno as well as the school itself.

[7]Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, pp. 99-100.

[8]Lewis Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass (Harmondsworth: Puffin Books, 1964), p. 216.

[9]Steiner, The Colors of Rhetoric, p.128.

[10]Michael O. Bellamy, "An Interview with Iris Murdoch," Contemporary Literature, xviii (1977), p.138.

[11]Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, p.99. This theme is taken up again in subsequent novels, notably in The Sacred and Profane Love Machine.

[12]Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, pp. 100-101.

[13]Murdoch, The Fire and the Sun, pp. 76-77.

[14]One is prepared for the statuesque pose of the trio, as the brothers' skin is compared to Grecian marbles (41), and Rosa's hands are described as "like the big hands of a statue." (58)

[15]Alain Robbe-Grillet, For a New Novel (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1965), pp. 20-21.

[16]It is ironic, in this novel of photographs, that Rainborough's garden wall is relocated in order to erect a radiology department for the neighbouring hospital.

[17]Murdoch, The Unicorn, p.219.

[18]James Hall, The Lunatic Giant in the Drawing Room (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), p.207.

[19]From an interview with John Haffenden, a portion of which is published as an epigraph to Frances Spalding's Vanessa Bell (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1983).

[20]Murdoch, The Fire and the Sun, p.77.

Chapter Two

[1]Birdsall, "Art, Beauty and Morality in the Novels of Iris Murdoch," p. 104.

[2]Charles McCorquodale, Bronzino (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1981), p. 89.

[3]Farmer, Poets and the Visual Arts in Renaissacnce England, x.

[4]McCorquodale, Bronzino, p.89.

[5]Iris Murdoch, The Nice and the Good (Frogmore: Triad/ Panther Books, 1977), p.127. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[6]Rencontres avec Iris Murdoch, p.77.

[7]Note that Mary Clothier, a character who aspires to good, deludes herself into thinking that she has found "the lost other person" in Willy Kost. As Mary approaches Willy before asking him to marry her, her vulnerability is revealed in references to twins, for these represent wishful thinking rather than reality: "Today we are like Siamese twins, she thought, only we are joined together by some sort of delicious extensible warm ectoplasm." (160)

[8]Dipple, Work for the Spirit, pp. 3-4.

[9]Iris Murdoch, The Bell (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1966), p. 190.

[10]When Paula compares Richard with Eric, she states: "'Richard is so cerebral, even his sensuality is cerebral. Eric was like a piece of earth, or maybe more like the sea. I always associated him with the sea.'" (283) Later, when the pressure is off, she laughs with Ducane, and makes the following ironic comment: "'Things seem to happen to Eric on ships!'" (286)

[11]This calls to mind Radeechy's reaction to his wife's infidelity, except that in this case, the injured party is the lover, not the spouse.

[12]This description seems to contradict my assertion earlier that Murdoch via Paula does not deviate in any radical way from accepted interpretations of the allegory. Paula sees the figure in the upper left as Truth, not Fraud, but I would argue that Fraud is the obverse of Truth. Paula's interpretation of the moral does not differ radically, then, for when Time pulls the veil away from Fraud, the truth is exposed. Similarly, calling the curly-haired boy with the roses Pleasure instead of Folly represents another commonly accepted reading of the painting which does not affect the moral.

[13]Iris Murdoch, A Fairly Honourable Defeat (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972), p.86. Hereafter cited as FHD.

[14]Murdoch, FHD, p. 200.

[15]Murdoch, The Fire and the Sun, p. 43.

[16]Murdoch, FHD, p. 201.

[17]Iris Murdoch, An Accidental Man (Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1979), p. 87. Hereafter cited as AM.

[18]Murdoch, AM, p. 342.

[19]Ibid., p. 241.

[20]Birdsall, "Art, Beauty and Morality," p. 121.

[21]Murdoch, FHD, p. 229.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Ibid., p. 233.

[24]Murdoch, FHD, p.234.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid., p. 235.

[27]Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, p. 99.

[28]Birdsall, "Art, Beauty and Morality," p. 117.

[29]Betty M. Foley, "Iris Murdoch's Use of Works of Art as Analogies of Moral Themes," Ph.D. dissertation, Wayne State University, 1979, p.79.

[30]I do not propose to comment at length upon the possible significance of the error here in attributing the Pool of Tears picture to Through the Looking Glass instead of to Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. If the error is Ducane's, not Iris Murdoch's, one may forgive him, for he is under considerable strain in this scene.

Chapter Three

[1]The only possible exception is The Black Prince. The allusion, however, is not from a title of another work of art, nor is it confined to one play by Shakespeare, although the most significant play to consider in this respect is All's Well the Ends Well. A work of art discussed in the novel, Hamlet, allows for more extensive metaphorical analysis. For this type of discussion, see Richard Todd's The Shakespearean Interest (London: Vision Press Ltd., 1979), pp. 24-42.

[2]Iris Murdoch, The Sacred and Profane Love Machine (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976), p. 68. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[3]The abbreviation is not to be confused with the title of Jacqueline Susanne's chef-d'oeuvre, The Love Machine!

[4]Betty Foley has noted the similarity between this episode and the event depicted in Titian's painting, "The Death of Acteon".

[5]David's perception is akin to Henry's realization near the end of Henry and Cato: "How different it is, violence in art, from the horror of the real thing. The dogs are tearing out Acteon's entrails while the indifferent goddess passes. Something frightful and beastly and terrible has been turned into one of the most beautiful things in the world. How is it possible? Is it a lie, or what? Did Titian know that really human life was awful, awful, that it was nothing but a slaughterhouse? Did Max know, when he painted witty cleverly composed scenes of torture?" (Triad/Granada, 1977), p.308. Henry's conception of life as a slaughterhouse (a Fassbinder-type vision) is rather more intense than David's aversion to the way dogs eat, but the connection between dreams and art is strengthened by Henry's observation.

[6]Some allusions to Alice in the novels of Iris Murdoch are fleeting, but others, as in the case of The Italian Girl, serve as metaphors of failure in vision. Edmund is unable to see his niece, Flora, for what she really is. His vision is obscured or "tinified" by notions of her as an Alice figure. These images are linked to his impression of Flora as the Pre-Raphaelite maiden or the girl in a painting by a Dutch master.

[7]Murdoch, The Bell, p. 190.

[8]Ibid., p.191.

[9]One might turn to Bradley's interpretation of Hamlet in The Black Prince for an example of a subjective and obsessive interpretation of a work of art that is incorporated into the text, a text that is Bradley's, not Iris Murdoch's.

[10]Jack I. Biles, "An Interview with Iris Murdoch," Studies in the Literary Imagination, 2(1977), p.125.

[11]The reader discovers later that, ". . . as it seemed to Blaise, Harriet's curious and more frequent night fears attested some unconscious feeling in his wife that all was not well. Hence the increasing regiment of dogs, hated symbol to Blaise of his own secret depravity." (77) It is no wonder, then, that Blaise is nearly devoured by his wife's dogs, once she has been forced to leave Hood House in despair.

[12]Note that the reader has somewhat of an advantage over Harriet, in that he is given the additional clue of the putto in Sacred and Profane Love who is pictured with a large, heavily foliated tree behind him. The putto is stirring the waters in the fountain, and this suggests Luca's role of stirring up trouble for Blaise.

[13]There is a certain amount of gamesmanship at work here which I suspect has been in Iris Murdoch's work from the beginning. A picture of Eduard Myer in Peter Saward's room in The Flight from the Enchanter is perhaps an internal symbol, for I have been unable to trace the identity of Myer.

[14]Sharing a "joke" with the reader in this fashion helps to create the illusion of a partnership between the author and "client" that Murdoch discusses in her address to the students of the university of Caen.

[15]Iris Murdoch, The Black Prince (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983), pp. 199-200.

[16]Edgar Wind, Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance (Harmondsworth: Peregrine Books, 1958), p. 148.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Elizabeth Dipple, in her article entitled "Iris Murdoch and Vladimir Nabokov:An Essay in Literary Realism and Experimentalism," suggests that wordgames are serious rather than funny for Iris Murdoch.

[19]Monty is also haunted by visions of his wife: "A guilt about Sophie roved sharply inside him and a cinematograph in his head re-enacted and re-enacted certain scenes." (201) In An Accidental Man, Garth suggests the same kind of image: "'The mind is a mechanical sort of cinema show with a rather small number of reels,'" p. 108.

[20]Wind, Pagan Mysteries, p. 142.

[21]The introduction to this paper has suggested that Henry and Cato, the exception here, is closer to the novels of the middle period than to those of the late one.

Conclusion

[1]Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, p. 84.

[2]By contrast, the paintings at the Wallace Collection in The Sea, the Sea become increasingly threatening, for they take Charles back to the sea, the stars, and the Platonic cave imagery of blindness to truth. When he comes upon Titian's pic-

ture of Perseus and Andromeda, he sees the sea monster, which seems to relate to the sea, but which actually allows Charles to peer into his unconscious. His response to paintings is selfish, and he is actually stricken down by his own unconscious at the gallery.

[3]Dipple, Work for the Spirit, p. 299.

[4]Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, p. 85.

[5]Ibid., p. 86.

[6]Rencontres , p. 86.

[7]I am taking the words "overt" and "covert" from Linda Hutcheon's book, Narcissistic Narrative(Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1980).

[8]Murdoch, FHD, p. 256.

[9]Ibid., p. 446.

[10]Murdoch, Bruno's Dream, pp. 215-216.

[11]"N" is so reticent about imposing form on the text that he does not even provide himself with a full fictitious name. The pun on the name he gives to the town is taking both narcissism and selfishness on the part of the"author"to extremes.

[12]Iris Murdoch, The Philosopher's Pupil (London: Chatto & Windus, 1983), p. 576. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[13]Stella's netsuke survive, but these are a symbol for nature in art. Only one fragile piece of Roman Glass resists George's fury.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Material

Murdoch, Iris. An Accidental Man. Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1979.

----------. "Against Dryness." Encounter. xvi (1961): 16-20.

----------. "L'art est l'imitation de la nature." Rencontres avec Iris Murdoch. Caen: University of Caen, 1978.

----------. The Bell. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1966.

----------. The Black Prince. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983.

----------. Bruno's Dream. Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1980.

----------. A Fairly Honourable Defeat. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972.

----------. The Fire and the Sun:Why Plato Banished the Artists. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.

----------. The Flight from the Enchanter. Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1976.

----------. Henry and Cato. London: Triad/Granada, 1977.

----------. The Italian Girl. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967.

----------. The Nice and the Good. Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1977.

----------. Nuns and Soldiers. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981.

----------. The Philosopher's Pupil. London: Chatto and Windus Ltd., 1983.

----------. The Red and the Green. London: Triad/Granada, 1978.

----------. The Sacred and Profane Love Machine. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976.

----------. The Sandcastle. Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1979.

----------. The Sea, the Sea. Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1980.

----------. A Severed Head. London: The Hollen Street Press Ltd., 1961.

----------. The Sovereignty of Good. New York: Schocken Books, 1970.

----------. "The Sublime and the Beautiful Revisited." Yale Review. xlix (1959): 247-271.

----------. The Time of the Angels. Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1978.

----------. Under the Net. Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1979.

----------. The Unicorn. Frogmore: Triad/Panther Books, 1977.

----------. An Unofficial Rose. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1964.

----------. A Word Child. New York: The Viking Press, 1975.

Secondary Material

Aiken, Gail Elizabeth. "This Accidental World: The Philosophy and Fiction of Iris Murdoch." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Tennessee, 1979.

Baldanza, Frank. Iris Murdoch. New York: Twayne Publishers Inc., 1974.

Bellamy, Michael O. "An Interview with Iris Murdoch." Contemporary Literature. 2(1977): 129-139.

Biles, Jack I. "An Interview with Iris Murdoch." Studies in the Literary Imagination. 2(1977): 115-125.

Birdsall, Michael. "Art, Beauty and Morality in the Novels of Iris Murdoch." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1980.

Byatt, A.S. Degrees of Freedom. London: Chatto and Windus Ltd., 1965.

Carroll, Lewis. Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. Harmondsworth: Puffin Books, 1981.

Dipple, Elizabeth. "Iris Murdoch and Vladimir Nabokov: An Essay in Literary Realism and Experimentalism." In The Practical Vision:Essays in English Literature in Honour of Flora Day,pp. 103-118. Edited by Jane Campbell and James Doyle. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1978.

----------. Iris Murdoch:Work for the Spirit. London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1982.

Farmer, Norman K., Jr. Poets and the Visual Arts in Renaissance England. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984.

Foley, Betty M. "Iris Murdoch's Use of Works of Art as Analogies of Moral Themes." Ph.D. dissertation, Wayne State University, 1979.

German, Howard. "Allusions in the Early Novels of Iris Murdoch." Modern Fiction Studies. 3(Autumn 1969): 361-366.

Hagstrum, Jean. The Sister Arts. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958.

Hall, James. The Lunatic Giant in the Drawing Room. Bloomington: Indiana Chicago Press, 1968.

Heyd, Ruth. "An Interview with Iris Murdoch." University of Windsor Review. I (Spring 1965): 138-143.

Hutcheon, Linda. Narcissistic Narrative:The Metafictional Paradox. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1980.

McCorquodale, Charles. Bronzino. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1981.

Nettell, Stephanie. "An Exclusive Interview with Iris Murdoch." Books and Bookmen, September 1966, pp. 14-15, 66.

Robbe-Grillet, Alain. For a New Novel. New York: Grove Press Inc., 1965.

Scholes, Robert. The Fabulators. New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.

Steiner, Wendy. The Colors of Rhetoric. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

Todd, Richard. The Shakespearean Interest. London: Vision Press Ltd., 1979.

Watrin, Jany. "Iris Murdoch's A Fairly Honourable Defeat." Revue des Langues Vivantes. 38 (1972): 46-64.

Wind, Edgar. Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance. Harmondsworth: Peregrine Books, 1967.

Zabel, Morton Dauwen, ed. The Portable Henry James. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1951.